THE BEST WAY

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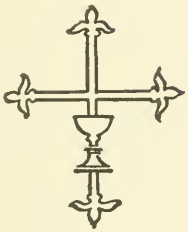
THE BEST WAY

BY

FREDERICK H. RINDGE



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Dedicated in Love

TO WHOMSOEVER PERADVENTURE MAY READ THIS BOOK

TRUSTING IT WILL BRING TO SUCH

A REVENUE OF PEACE, HOPE

AND JOY

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When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple, an honourable counsellor who waited for the Kingdom of God. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. — MATTHEW xxvii. 57, 58; MARK xv. 43; LUKE xxiii. 50, 51.

INTRODUCTION

Why do you think I wrote this book? For money? No. For my health? No. For pleasure? No. For praise? No, — because if you gave it me I could not keep it; for when, seventeen years ago, I gave my heart to God, He waited to see if I were sincere, it seemed to me; then He told me He wanted me to work for Him. I told God I would, and that I should give to Him all praise and glory for whatever I might do.

But He pays me a commission, — peace in the soul. Ah! I am well paid.

It was written with the hope that it would awaken holy aspirations and strengthen determinations to live for Heaven.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Are you Saved?	1
Getting Religion	17
Can a Man know God?	31
The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom	53
Trusting God	71
The Still, Small Voice of God	87
The Ecstasy of Hope	105
By their Fruits ye shall know them	129
Who was Christ?	147
Love Divine	155
A Lost Law, or, the Perfect Law of Liberty	169

ARE YOU SAVED?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW BIRTH, OR AN EXPLANATION OF BEING BORN AGAIN

ARE YOU SAVED?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW BIRTH, OR AN EXPLANATION OF BEING BORN AGAIN.

THE spirit of man can penetrate the mystery of faith and spiritual things, but his mind cannot unless it is aided by the Spirit and controlled thereby. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned.

"A *rational* faith I must have," writes a friend to me. That is a paradox. Consider. Such a phrase means belief by the reason or by the mind. Now Christian faith is something having its source in the spirit and not in the mind. The mind only falls in line when the spirit leads in faith. Paul in writing to Timothy says "the mystery of faith." Paul had no rational faith, but he had a "reasonable service," which partly consists in taking the word of God as it is given, and accepting, under obedience, its teachings of Heaven and Hell, the way to enter one

and escape the other, and in accepting its definitions of faith.

Now we approach the consideration of a spiritual matter.

Jesus Christ said unto Ruler Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

To be born implies the coaction and conjunction of two forces or factors. Remember that marriage in the Lord is most holy and typifies the union of Christ with His church.

The new or second birth of a man is the result of God's Spirit coming in contact with man's spirit, by and with the consent of the latter. God is always willing to give His Holy Spirit to those who ask for it. As the fisherman hears the breaking surf through the fog and shapes his course thereby to the unseen shore, so we steer for the invisible shores of Paradise when we hear the holy organ's surge, in unison with a divine hymn, and the preacher's voice urging us heavenward. Aye! "Faith comes by hearing." A man's mind hears the message of Christ to repent and be saved; the soul beneath the mind hungers for the message and controls

the will and lets in the message borne by the Holy Spirit. If the man keeps that union of God's Spirit with his own, the result is, in due time, the new birth. This time or period varies. It is longer with some, shorter with others. The length depends upon how you apply yourself to grow in grace, or rather to really believe in Christ.

Again, there are those who, brought up from childhood in the faith of their fathers, cannot remember or discern the exact time of their new birth. To others it comes like a sudden revelation, so that they never can forget the date, the hour, and the surroundings.

Now, with fish, or animals, or birds, or with trees, by pollenization, in all cases in fact, a second factor is necessary to accomplish a birth. The pollen of one tree must reach the pollen of another tree. The fish eggs deposited by the side of the stream must be acted upon to create life.

The moment the pollen of one certain tree blows upon another, *that* moment the *possibility* of a new vital seed comes into existence.

As in the beginning God breathed into the nostrils of dust-made Adam and he became a living soul, so when the Spirit of God touches the spirit of man (even though the way be incomprehensible),[1] as the pollen blows from tree to tree, then is begun to be born within that man a new creature in Christ Jesus, — a new life. But remember, man is made a free agent: when he hears the word preached or is impressed into conviction in any way, if he admits God's Spirit into him, so that it can reach his spirit, then he begins to be born again.

The moment the fish eggs deposited by the brook's bank become acted upon by another fish, that moment a new life begins; you may reach down into the water and destroy the eggs and kill the new life: you may throw a bird's egg on the ground and end its possibilities of song and beauty.

When God's Spirit touches your spirit, there begins a new life, a new creature in

[1] God's peace that he gives men "passeth understanding," but we do know the way to get that peace. So with the New Birth, while we cannot comprehend the inner workings of its method, yet we know how it is brought about.

Christ; and when, after due time of growth in grace, it is ready to be born, behold! *you* are born again, a new creature in Christ Jesus, to be fertile in good works. This is the new birth.

Now, while you have been reading these words, if God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, has touched your spirit in convicting power, crush it not; destroy not the germ of eternal life, but keep it warm by the tears of repentance for sins committed ("all have sinned"), feed it daily with the grace of Christ in your every-day life, and in due time that germ will develop and be born, and *you* will be that which is born, — a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then you will be "born again," — born of the Spirit of God.

When you are born again you will realize that you *are* born again, that you *are* a new man in Christ Jesus. Then you are "born of the Spirit."

What two forces coact to cause the new birth? God's Spirit and your spirit. To show their intimate relation, remember the scripture, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Hold this explanation of the philosophy of the new birth close to your memory, and whenever the Spirit of God touches your spirit, then will you understand what it means and you can the better be bound to God.

The ancient Greeks believed "to know thyself" was the height of wisdom. It is great wisdom. But to rule yourself is greater. Alfred, the great king of England, dying, called his son to him and said, "You will soon rule England, but before you can rule England, you must rule yourself."

And so, knowing yourself in your relation to the new birth, and ruling yourself by not driving away God's Holy Spirit when He comes to bless you, you can make a success of piety, a success of your religion.

Knowing ourselves, now let us rule ourselves.

The words of Christ, "Ye must be born again," apply to each one of us; we cannot escape them, we do not want to, yet they are the only way of escape we have.

But some one says, "How can I understand the birth of the Spirit of God when the scripture says, "The wind bloweth where it

listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." That is to say, it is incomprehensible, but the mind of man illumined by the Holy Ghost can discern and grasp a truth hidden in those words which will help us. You remember the peace of God is mentioned as "the peace which passeth understanding," yet, though we do not know, nor can we explain fully that peace, still we know how to get it, since it is the fruit of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey the words of Christ.

It is so with being born again: there is a great truth hidden in these words which the mind of man can grasp when it is explained to him.

But how can I so call on you, friend, who are unsaved, to give your heart to God, that you will be moved to repentance and love for Heaven? Alas, in my weakness I have but one hope, to say as David said: —

> "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation,
> Uphold me by Thy free Spirit."

Then God's Spirit will accompany my

words and you will feel that it is not only I that bear the message, but that the essence of the message itself comes from God.

It may be, God will help me so to do by a parable: —

Come with me into yonder field where stands that derrick. They are boring an artesian well, for this is in the artesian belt.

"Good morning, sir," I say, "what strata of the earth has your drill gone through?" "Well," he replies, "we bored into the loam and a deposit of clay, then we struck a layer of dry sand, drilled through hard-pan and bed rock, and are now in the gravel. If you stay with us we expect soon to be in the water-bearing sand."

While waiting, the foreman explained to us that the waters underlying the land had their source in the mountains, and the consequent high pressure forced it to the surface through the hole made by the drill.

All the men's faces were smiling because they knew they were near the water. Suddenly the drill dropped and the foreman called out to the engineer, "Reverse your engine and hoist away. We've struck it!"

Up came the drill, and the limpid, purling,

cool artesian water rose to the top of the casing and flowed over to bless the ground and make it fertile.

So to-day I bring you in love the glad tidings that you will be safe when you are saved, and I bid you hasten to make your peace with God. I know you understand it.

The message is like the derrick's drill.

It may have to go down through the stratum of doubt, through the shale of a seared, hardened, deadened conscience, or through layers of indifference and worldliness, or of temptation, silliness, resistance, self-conceit, self-reliance, hardness of cold culture, fear of the world, or excesses in business, fashion, or pleasure, of "I never did any harm," and past the bed-rock of sin, of sins committed and unforgiven sins, or of something else, but if the drill is *God-sharpened*, it will finally penetrate the gravel of conviction, soon reach the water-bearing sand of conversion, and God will give orders to reverse the engine and hoist away, and the living water of Life will flow up to bless you forever.

Men, women, and children! Harken unto me! Your souls are in the artesian belt!

And why does Christ liken the possession of the Holy Ghost to a well of water within us springing up to eternal life? Why does He not say it permeates our being or fills our soul? Is it not that its source is in Heaven, just as the source of the artesian well water is higher in the mountains?

Are we saved? Comrade, are you saved? Do you have a dread of death and a fear of Hell, and a lack of assurance that if you should die to-night you could escape Hell and enter Heaven?

Behold that sinking steamer and the frantic passengers called to meet their God without an hour's warning. The lifeboats can never be launched in such a sea. Look, there are people praying to God who never prayed before, and who had denied the power of prayer. They foolishly and against their interest thought it was too much trouble to pray. See them there! face to face with death and unprepared; the need of the soul asserts itself and they pray. It is natural to pray. It is unnatural not to. When you do not feel in the element of prayer, be afraid.

Oh, turn to-night! There is a power right

by your side that will take away your sins, save you, and satisfy your longing for peace and rest in Christ. There is a present power on earth to save us from our sins. That power is the willingness of God to save you and forgive you if you will only have sorrow for your sins and take God as your God, Christ as your Master, and the Holy Spirit as your Comforter.

Oh, won't you turn to-night and be freed from the power of sin? Ah, then you remember the pit from which you were dug and rejoice in your salvation. Ah yes! we were all dug from a pit, we who have known the saving power of God through Christ. Your pit may have been shallow and mine deep, yet yours was a pit nevertheless. It is wrong not to trust God, not to give Him your heart. Though you may be pure and honest, yet are you Christ's? Have you the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God? Oh, be not deceived by cold culture and being an honorable citizen. Those are the rocks on which many eternal wrecks have come.

Are you deep in a pit of sin? Be of good cheer. I know whereof I speak, and

God can reach to the bottom and lift you out. His arm is long and His heart full of sympathy and mercy. Call up to Him and see!

Be sorry for what you have done that is wrong, turn from your sins and do good and right, and God will put joy in your heart, make your life beautiful, and give you a passport into Heaven and a deliverance from Hell.

Jesus loves children. He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Children! behold your Master, Christ Jesus. Love Him, God's teacher; and He will never leave nor forsake you.

The time is passing away. This hour is closing. If the Spirit of God has touched our spirit, let us hold fast that which we have experienced, and go forth keeping that holy thing in our hearts, not talking about it, but doing like Mary, who kept these things in her heart and did not tell her neighbors. So keep warm your faith in God, read daily the words of Christ, go where you can be helped heavenward, and in due time God will say, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so," and

then you will be strong enough to work for God, and in Christian work there is always room at the bottom as well as at the top of the ladder.

GETTING RELIGION

GETTING RELIGION

GETTING religion is like securing an education; you get something you did not have before.

There is a certain mystery about it, because some of the greatest gifts that God has given to man He has surrounded with mystery, for He knows well the mind of man and that he most esteems and stands in awe of that which he cannot fully comprehend, but understands well enough to realize its blessing and to make use of it. Let him fully grasp it and make it himself, he disowns it and passes on, seeking other things to conquer. But the religion of Christianity, God has declared, shall not pass away, but forever remain the system of eternal life.

So Paul says of "the mystery of faith;" namely, faith is a mysterious thing which can bless a man, but the workings of which are above his complete comprehension, as God meant them to be, to hold him ever to its

benefits. So is life itself, and electricity. So, too, the peace which passeth understanding; *that* blessing is beyond our grasp, but we still know how to get it, and how to enjoy it. So, too, the book of Revelation, which is the last chapter in the Book of Life and Death, instead of summing up all that has gone before, like earthly books, prophetically gives us glimpses of the future to delight us with its promises and awe us with incomprehensible statements. This book is a blessed mystery.

Thus religion, and life, and electricity, and faith, hope, love, and peace, are some of the mysteries which bless mankind.

Religion is a mystery, so ordained of God to create awe, which, makes man heed it in reverence, because, if he understood it perfectly, his nature is such he would feel too independent to worship God.

Yet religion, like peace, is to be obtained, and we know how to get it: it can be grasped by the mind and put in practice.

Let us consider this theme to-day.

When a man realizes that God is calling him to repent and to lead the right life in Christ, he feels that his duty is to obey, to

have faith in God and to do the words of Christ. Believing is believing, but faith is believing *in*, and going ahead. A man says he believes in life insurance, but does not get his life insured. Another says he does and goes and gets a policy. One believed in it, the other had faith in it.

What is getting religion like? It is as when on a cold autumn day you are sitting and resting from the hunt on a hillside, and there is a passing cloud between you and the sun; suddenly or gradually the sun bursts out of the cloud and sheds its warmth on you.

If you wish to get religion, go back to the faith of a little child, to which Christ likens the Kingdom of Heaven. If you ask God's forgiveness and seek His Holy Spirit, there will be no trouble about your doubts, your sins, your feelings, or any such matters; make your faith like a little child, and those great black doubts will turn white as snow by the power of God through Christ.

"But I can't believe as a little child," some one says. But you can if you ask God to help you, and so believe and are sincere. Keep on asking until you receive. We sometimes think we are sincere when we are

not. Keep working at this sincerity until you are really sincere.

Ask God to come to you and pray to Him to help you know Him for yourself, so that you can know His still small voice, that wonderful "symbol of humility" and know from Him the way you should go. The still small voice is *so* still, yet it is audible to the soul. Sound travels slowly, the flash of the cannon is seen before the sound is heard. The throne of God in distant Heaven is far away, so is it not to be expected that when the voice of God reaches us, the sound of it shall be soft and low? When the lightning flashes near us, the loud report follows quickly after, but when the lightning is far away, it is a long time before the sound of it reaches our ears, and then it is soft and low. In Heaven, I fancy, the senses of the redeemed are commensurate with the greatness of the New Jerusalem. Our present eyes and ears could not endure what is in store for the faithful, yet the redeemed of the Lord rejoice in their redemption powers and capacities.

What would you think, and how would you like it, if you could know and be satisfied that God spoke to you and assured you

of a home in Heaven and an escape from Hell? You can know these things.

Pray to Him, "Come, Lord, come, Lord, reveal Thyself to me, that I may know Thy way and my way that I should go."

Last summer I met a little boy, barefoot, peaked, and hungry, in the Union Station, Boston. He asked me for five cents to get some food with, as he had had nothing to eat. I said, "Do you know God?" "Yes, He is my Father," was the quick reply. "Where does He live?" "In Heaven," was the answer, which came with eyes and a voice full of simple, childlike faith. That kind of faith is what is going to get us into Heaven. His faith was full of assurance; he knew.

Doctor Guthrie was dying; he asked to have a hymn sung. "What shall we sing?" they asked. "Sing a bairn's hymn," he said. So they sang, —

> "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
> Look upon a little child."

If you enter the Kingdom of Heaven, you must be like a little child; simplicity and sincerity of faith must be yours.

There are two present benefits of getting

religion, or, rather, of having it. The first is, if Satan ever tempts you to get blue, immediately call in religion to the rescue. "Have regard to the recompense of the reward." That cheers us up. Then, with this advantage gained, call on God for help to drive Satan and his depression away, and soon an angel of light will suffuse you with the warm light of the heavenly presence and the darkness will flee away.

The other is this. Do the faces or names of those you have wronged or misjudged often come before your mind like accusing witnesses to disturb your peace? Do you seize an unwholesome novel or seek unworthy excitement to drive away such condemning thoughts? There is a better way. Confess your sins to God in repentance, tell Him you will do differently henceforth. Tell or write the person or persons whom you have wronged, and lo! if told in repentance, the accusing sorrow will leave your life, and Christ will be a hiding and resting place more precious to you than a novel or excitement, although these, when good and wholesome, have their places in life.

Ah! if you want to get away from your-

self, get away from yourself in Christ, — not in unwholesomeness. The Christ exchange is the best bargain.

If you get religion, God and Christ and the Holy Ghost will make something out of you, ordinary one! What do you amount to, without God? Great one, you don't amount to much now, perhaps, in God's sight, but Christ will make something out of you, — something worth being; you will amount to something then.

In Boston, the other day, I entered a store to buy a picture of Longfellow's home. The little old maid that sold the picture had neither health, nor beauty, nor abundance, nor height, nor fine clothing, nor jewels to make her appear better; yet she had an appearance which commanded respect and reverence. She had Christ in her eye, God was apparent in her very presence, just as Virgil used to say of Juno, "The goddess was apparent by her walk."

This little woman I saw amounted to something, was a power for good in the world, and had a source of happiness to herself and to others; yet of herself, without religion, you would have passed her by un-

noticed, or bought the picture scarcely realizing she was there. I thought to myself, "Well, God has made something out of you, surely."

Friends, let God make something out of us. Getting religion does it.

"Many are called, but few are chosen," makes you stumble; you think you are not called and are discouraged. But listen: the explanation of this is that we are all called to do the will of God, but, as we see plainly enough, comparatively few meet the requirements and complete their obedience to the words of Christ. It is not that God is partial to a few and selects them, but it is that few prove themselves worthy to be chosen, and so *are* chosen. We all have an equal chance.

As an illustration, consider the exhibit of the Royal Academy in London. Many artists paint pictures and exhibit their abilities, but comparatively few out of the number receive the prizes.

Blame not God, but arise to the work, knowing that He will help the helpless, that the poor in spirit are blessed, and that He is not willing that *one* should be lost.

A man takes hold of the handles of an electric battery and receives a shock into his hands and arms; he cannot see it, yet he feels it.

So the soul has feeling: when it receives hope from God, when it receives divine forgiveness in return for repentance and faith, the soul feels the power and facts of hope and forgiveness. A man cannot see it, but he can feel it. It is as real as the battery shock.

A man standing by the battery who had not tried it might say, "You did not receive any shock." So a man who knew not the power of God to save and who had never tried it, might say, "You have not received salvation. It is all fancy. You have not become reconciled to God. You do not feel your sins are forgiven."

Yet both experiences were real and true.

Comrade, I speak to your soul! I do not come to condemn you, but to bring you good news, glad tidings of great joy; that there is a present power in the world, aye, right by your side, which if you invoke will put your sins far away from you and leave peace and salvation in their stead. That

power is the mercy of God through Christ unto divine forgiveness. I come not to condemn you, but to tell you that there is only a door between you and eternal life, and that I know where the key is, and I have come to tell you so you can go and get it and enter in. The door is Christ, and the key is repentance.

Be sorry for your sins; resolve you will, with God's help, leave them and follow His way, that you may be blessed; and your mourning shall turn to joy, your night to day, and despondency to hope! Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?

There is right by your side a power to take away your sins, be they great or be they small.

Is there any truth in the Bible?

Is it a fact, this immortality of the soul?

Is there a Heaven and a Hell?

The oldest books in the world say so.

These books explain creation, foretell what will be the outcome of the future, the end of the world, and give such an accurate picture of man that we see in it ourselves, and wonder!

But stay. Is this terrible uncertainty of

the future for our own selves to be solved? Yes, religion solves it, through Christ. That solution of uncertainty alone is worth attending to the demands of God and His commands.

One wonderful thing about getting the religion of Christ is that it solves the problem of eternity. There comes at times to every man's mind a wondering about the next world, whether there is any existence after death, or if death is the end. If we believe in Christ and seek to do His words, this curiosity is satisfied, and we know to our satisfaction that there is an existence after death and that we cannot escape it any more than we can escape death. When we have reached that stage in faith, then we are actively concerned to see if we can cultivate ourselves for Heaven, that we may surely escape Hell.

> Our home above is bright and fair,
> The angels now are singing there,
> And through the clear translucent air
> The praise of God sounds everywhere.

Blessed religion! by it we know how to steer our course in everyday life, it helps us to rise above temptations, it keeps us out of

countless quarrels and troubles, it bids us not to judge others and so keep peace, it bids us not to take anything that does not belong to us, which would make us poorer instead of richer. Blessed religion! It is divine help to human helplessness. It is divine foresight to guide human shortsightedness.

Have you got religion?

CAN A MAN KNOW GOD?

CAN A MAN KNOW GOD?

Can a man know God? Yes, a man can know God provided he tries to find Him and does the preliminary work and study required. By study I mean the application to his task which is necessary. He must obey the words of Christ out of a heart made willingly and longingly obedient through fear of God and love of God, after being very sorry for sins committed, to that extent that he resolutely determines that he will sin no more. The Bible becomes his text-book.

Can a man get a degree of doctor of philosophy at Harvard University? Yes, if he pursues the curriculum laid down and applies himself to the task and so strives that he is able to pass the examinations.

So, in knowing God, a man has to pass examinations before he gets his degree. God's Spirit will in love seek to see if he knows how to forgive his enemy and so does; His Spirit or God Himself will in love observe

how he stands on points of purity, unselfishness, long-suffering, and humility. If he can pass the examination and is not found wanting, lo, he gets his degree as one who knows God.

The man who took his degree of doctor of philosophy at Harvard looks back to the days of his primer and finds the alphabet and multiplication table were as fundamentally necessary to his high learning as were eventually the classics and logarithms. So, in the pursuit of a knowledge of God, the simple faith of a little child is as fundamentally requisite as is an understanding of regeneration and justification by faith.

He who begins to seek to acquire a full knowledge of God should not despise the day of small things, and should not forget that in mastering one little fault he perhaps strengthens the one weak stone in his foundation; the overcoming of that little fault may be the *sine qua non* of his success in finding God. Can one be bright in logarithms who stumbles in arithmetic? Ah, this point is a place where many a one stumbles.

Another stumbling point with some is this. One says, "How can I be sorry for sins when

my life has been good? I have been pure and honest." Has your heart been always so good? God says, "*Give me thy heart.*" He also says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Have you always been forgiving, unresentful, pure, unselfish, full of faith in Christ, and very humble in your heart? Do you not need a new heart? When we are told to follow Christ, it means we are to be Christlike. Ah, now we see we have all committed sin and can indeed be desperately sorry for having done wrong, realize that we need a new heart, and can cry out of a sincere heart, "What must I do to be saved?" If you had been differently born, you might have been a greater sinner.

But something more than a determination to lead a new life is necessary. For what shall we do with the sins of the past which come up in our memory to accuse and condemn us? Ah, we need a Saviour for those sins, we need salvation and forgiveness before we can go on to a further knowledge of God. This forgiveness Christ supplies; if we believe in Him and sincerely pray for forgiveness, He will do as we ask and put our sins of the past away from us as far as

Boston is from Los Angeles: we shall also be satisfied that we are forgiven.

A determination to lead a new life without getting our sins forgiven is not enough. It will prevent us getting our degree which will admit us to the higher education of Heaven. We must have our past forgiven. Otherwise it would be like the oft used simile of a man who owed a debt to his grocer. He made up his mind he would stop buying on credit and would pay his bills as he went along. So he went to the grocer and said, "Here, sir, I want to pay for these goods I bought to-day, and hereafter I mean to pay each time I buy. I have repented of my slipshod way of doing business and we will start on a new basis from this day." And he turned to go out the door and leave the store. But the grocer called out to him, "Say, hold on, how about that old debt you owe me? You have not paid that!"

Ah, there is the trouble! Before we can advance to a knowledge of God we must get our debt of sin paid. Before we can get further credit from God we must settle with Him first. "Christ paid the debt and set us free." Oh, get Christ so you can be free.

"Whoever cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," saith the Saviour.

Some there are who seek to smother and to press down out of sight and remembrance certain wrongs they have done, and seek to build upon such a foundation a complete Christian character. They do not succeed very well, because their foundation has a flaw in it; they are a little false because their foundation is a little false, in that they have not been duly forgiven nor have they confessed to those they have wronged. They should undo the wrong done by confessing to God and to those they have wronged. Then their foundation would be true and they would be complete.

Such a one seeks to get away from himself or herself. Ah! that is impossible: but by repentance, confession, and forgiveness divine we can get ourselves right so that we will not want to get away from ourselves.

Oh, seek not to get away from yourself in the depths of a sin-stained novel; when the book is ended, lo! you yourself are there. Seek rather to lose yourself in the service of God, and then God will dwell in you, and you will love yourself and your own company.

To advance in a knowledge of God we must be fully satisfied about our past and our future; then if our present is in harmony with God and His laws, the past and future do not scare us.

Almost all men believe in a Hell, or rather they fear what Eternity may hold; but knowing God well takes away that fear of Eternity.

In the Hawaiian Islands is a great cliff called the Pali; on the tableland of which this cliff is the edge there was once a fierce battle. One army drove another over the cliff, and a multitude fell to their death over the steep precipice. For a generation people used to go out there to the base of the cliff to see the great pile of bleached human bones that bore witness to the awful fight. Now in Santa Monica there is a high bluff, and very steep. I have often seen despondent people sitting near the edge of this cliff, and I would sometimes ask myself what it was that kept these people from just falling off that bluff and killing themselves? Why was it that there was not a pile of human bones at its base just as there was beneath the Pali? Ah, I knew it was the dread of

Hell. Walking one day along the bluff with a man, I asked him the same question; his reply was, "It is the fear of Eternity." But, blessed be God, Christ and a knowledge of God takes away the fear of Eternity, and in its place puts a love for and a confidence in our long home.

That is one reason why it is good to know God.

Some one says, "Oh, it is too much trouble, this knowing God for yourself." Do not deceive yourself. Is it too much trouble to step off the track upon the approach of an express train? Is it too much trouble to put on a life preserver when the ship is sinking? And those precautions are to save you only for the few remaining years on earth. Christ is the life preserver forever. And He saves you against trouble and sorrow here all your life as well as against eternal Hell.

Sometimes we think it too much trouble to pray. A father said to his son, "Did you say your prayers, son?" "No, father, but I was just going to."

There was a certain youth seventeen years old who had a rifle. Two younger lads looked up to him with great admiration.

He was their hero. So they were kind to him and did what he said, and cultivated him in order that he would take them hunting. It was not so much their duty to be kind to him as it was to their interest; it was a privilege to go hunting, so it was a privilege to cultivate him.

So, also, we should be kind towards God and do what He says, and give Him praise and prayer and cultivate His way, that we may enjoy the blessings He alone has to give. We should not look at it so much as a duty, but rather as a privilege.

Another youth with a rifle could be found, but there is only one God to know and to reward us.

"Too much trouble to know God?" "Too much trouble?" when knowing Him takes away the fear of Hell and saves you from the eternal fires thereof? Away with the words!

Good versus Evil. It is the present battle. You have to take one side or the other. There is no middle ground. You must decide to serve God and to know Him, or else you will drift, drift, drift, into the seas of Satan, and get so near him you will know

him, and drift about so constantly that you will become waterlogged in sin and sink into the eternal depths. Oh, turn!

Will it pay to know God? Yes.

Why am I here to reach your hearts to-day? For my health? No. For money? No. For praise? No; because if you gave it to me I would not keep it. Many years ago I gave my heart to God. And I told Him that whatever I did for Him, or accomplished through the power of the Holy Ghost, I would take no glory for myself. So when I receive cheques of praise or applause, I endorse them over to Him and He pays me a commission of peace in the soul. And I am well paid, and oh, so well satisfied. It is amply sufficient.

But why am I here? Because it is my duty. Because having been delivered from the fear of death, and having come to know God for myself, I come to bring the good tidings of great joy to others, that they may find the same blessings and know God for themselves. Would I be right to be silent?

To know God we must get near Him, near His heart: by doing His Son's words we can get near Him. They are not so

many but that we can learn them. Once in a meeting, after a testimony by a Mr. Hemingway, who to my great delight had recently given his heart to God, I asked for the singing of the best hymn in the book. "Nearer my God to Thee" was proposed and sung. Yes, that is the best way to know God, — get nearer and nearer to Him.

If we know God, God will make Himself known to us. We can understand His mind in large measure. We can realize to our satisfaction that He speaks to us in "the still, small voice," that best symbol of humility, as it has been said. We can be satisfied in our own consciousness that He is leading us. We can be *conscious* of that *fact*.

If we know God, we know we are heirs to a great inheritance, that we have a mansion in the skies, that everything works to our good under a divine Master's foresight, and that angels encamp around us to protect us from harm.

If we know God, we are kept out of troubles so dreadful that this fact alone is worth our best endeavor to find Him.

A hundred years ago the preacher used to ask, "Have you the witness of the Spirit that

you are a child of God?" If some one said "No," the reply was, "Then you are a child of the devil." That was wrong, because there are those who are servants of God, without being children of God. There are those who believe in Christ enough to keep them from committing great sins, who are not yet sufficiently advanced in their education, their growth in grace, to put them in the advanced class of the beauty of holiness, to get akin to Christ. Oh! why do so much without getting full wages, which you could secure if you only did a little more? The wages God gives are righteously comparative, and methinks they increase in great jumps the nearer we get to the glory of complete obedience, to the sacred place where every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

But lest we seem to assume too much, let us see whether in the olden time there were those who knew God, and that He was.

Listen unto Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

And unto God through David: "Be still and know that I am God."

And unto God through Jeremiah: "Was

not this to know me? saith the Lord." And again from the same sources: "For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." See also Hebrews viii. 11.

Listen unto God through Hosea: "Thou shalt know the Lord."

Listen unto Paul: "I know whom I have believed."

Listen unto John: "We know that we know Him," etc.

But while remembering these evidences let us not forget that, as Paul says, "I know nothing by myself." That is, things that were once incomprehensible to our minds, now by the power of the attained presence of the Holy Spirit become knowable.

Says one, "If you know Him, why don't I?" Because you have not the Holy Ghost.

And we need not stop with Paul. Each century has its heroes of the faith who knew God, great men and unknown men, down from Paul, down, down, down to the doors of our time and verily into the witnessing voices of many now alive. Hallelujah! Amen! To the end of time!

Let us realize the goodness of the greatness of peace with God, which comes from knowing Him. Let us be largely content with such knowledge. Let us not entirely give up our lives to nervously seeking to obtain many things that strangle the spirit. If the "many things" are to be ours *from God* they will come to us, not in nervousness, but in calmness. Oh yes! in contentment there is great gain. It is a ten per cent. proposition, *net;* nay, it is sin to make it so small: rather a hundred fold is right, so great is the gain in contentment.

When we consider how vitally near we are to God, whether we admit it or not, it stands us in good stead to know God well. The ancient Greeks thought it the height of wisdom to "know thyself," yet if we know not God we cannot know ourselves; for it is written, "In Him we live and move and have our being." It was the breath of God that made clay Adam a living soul.

Now since it is so important for a human being to know God, in order to make his life a success and his death a success, let us consider *how* a man can know God.

This is the way: take the New Testament, go into your room and lock the door against interruption. Read the words of Christ, what Jesus said; then do them, each one, and skip none. Mary said at the marriage at Cana, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, *do it.*" Let her words also lead *you.* If you cannot do everything Christ says the first day, then do it the second, or keep practising at your task until you do. Then you will gradually get religion; and, wearing it in gradually, it will stay in.

Go into your private room and shut the door. Do you do it? Do you do whatsoever Christ says? "No," some one says. Then do not complain of a lack of grace, or peace, or power, or a knowledge of God. If we pray in secret, God rewards us openly.

When you try to do the words of Christ and seem to lack enthusiasm or interest, it is because you do not call to your mind your past or present sins, and fail to remember the pit from whence you were dug, no matter how shallow or how deep that pit was. Paul, it seems to us, always was a rare good man, yet he calls himself the chief of sinners.

When you try to do the words of Christ,

remember He means just what He says. There are two dangers here. One is to *over*estimate them, another to *under*estimate them.

For instance, a man with a family of children might read the words, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," and might give all his money away; and when his children needed it to help learn a trade or secure an education, or perhaps to bury their father, they would have none and it might have to be done at the public expense. Now the mistake such a man would make is this: forgetting to notice the little words, "for thyself." If he should keep money for righteous purposes it would not be for himself, but for others and for right. God will reveal to him how much he ought to give to God.

Indeed, it is always best to ask help of those who are able to teach when we are learning the meaning of the words of Christ.

Another way a man may *under*estimate the words of Christ is this: I used to know a man who said, "When Christ commanded us to love our enemies and be pure in our heart as well as in our acts, of course He did not mean that we could *really* love our

enemies, but rather do them no harm; and by keeping our minds pure He rather meant that we should not *do* anything impure."

Oh, comrade! do not stumble on such sad ideas of the holy Christ and on your own capacity through the power of God's Spirit indwelling in you and not yet fully resurrected from the dross of sin or neglect. Christ means for us to have our affections so pure that we indeed become pure in heart. He means for our natural selves to be so supernaturally changed that we become full of love divine and can love our enemies. But know this, that love is comparative; we cannot love a person naturally disagreeable to us with the same love whereby we love God or Christ, or our wife or children, or those with whom we blend naturally, but we can love such a person with a *deep* love, and with a feeling that is love and nothing but love. This we can do, not of ourselves, but when the Holy Spirit dwells in us and controls us. "In God we live and move and have our being." Perhaps Christ loves best the wickedest in His desire to save them.

When you find you have hard work to love your enemy, go by yourself and on your

knees pray God for power so to do. If you are sincere and mean what you say, the power will come. If you cannot go by yourself, pray where you are: the power will come. You will be able.

Again, if you have hard work to be real sorry for sin and are rather cold toward God, begin at once to be alarmed and pray for forgiveness, and ask Him for the presence of the Holy Spirit that you may be convicted anew of your sins and feel truly repentant, truly sorry. Then the ability to be sorry will come, if you mean what you say and are in real earnest. Then God will reveal Himself to you.

When we call ourselves men and women we often forget we are immortal spirits, destined to live in either one of two places.

If we know God, we know we shall go to Him if we are faithful to the end.

To continue to know God we should continue to praise Him. It is natural we should be so grateful. "Worship and praise to Him belong." Even the Hindoos have a proverb, "Ingratitude is an unpardonable crime."

There was a certain man swimming in the surf; suddenly a cramp came upon him and

he was helpless. He called for aid, and a strong-armed man braved the billows and rescued him. The saved man was brought ashore, was restored, and went up town into the streets, and told his friends he had been almost drowned, but did not mention the fact of his having been saved or name his rescuer from the seas.

What do you think of such an ingrate as that?

Ah, when we are saved from the surf of sin, let us tell others how we were saved and who saved us. Confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus.

It is a necessary way to get to know God.

Where would you be to-day if no one had told you about the Saviour?

You remember when Paul was in Athens he was on Mars Hill, and as he was preaching to the people he told them he saw an altar in their city with these words, "To the Unknown God." Paul told them that they were too superstitious, and then he went on to tell them about the God he knew, — *their* Father in Heaven as well as his. The God of Paul is the same God I have sought to declare unto you.

It is noble to be pure.

It is right to be honest.

It is necessary to be temperate.

It is wise to be industrious.

But to know God through Christ is best of all.

I have sought to plead my case. You are the jury. I have been but a poor lawyer for God, it may be; but I have such confidence in the merits of my case that I rest it here. It is for you to give the verdict.

Can a man know God?

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS
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THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

A LONG time ago, a certain pastor of the Park Street Church of Boston, the old "Brimstone Corner" church, as the worldly called it, because the whole truth was preached there, gave it as his opinion that he would have had more success in his ministry if he had preached much more of the love of God than of the wrath of God. Perhaps; but I think not.

At all events, perhaps following the said pastor's lead, the many years since have seen a great number of pulpits emphasizing the love of God and forgetting to emphasize the just wrath of God for His broken laws.

It is true that God's love is almost boundless, yet it *is* limited in that if we disobey His commandments, penalties follow. This proves His own proclamation that He is a jealous God, jealous of the obedience to His laws, and that He will punish those who break them.

The fact is, the fear of God and the love of God should be interlinked in all presentations of divine law and truth.

It seems to me that the aforesaid pastor's preferred system of presenting divine truth from the pulpit has had somewhat to do with the great lack of respect for authority in this country.

There is only one way to get away from the need of the fear of the Lord, and that is, to have perfect love for Him. "Perfect love casteth out fear." But the fear of God's wrath precedes the beginning of the wisdom of perfect love for Him. Daniel Webster said the "fear of Heaven expels all other fear." How true! The nation or individual who fears God is fearless, since wisdom then begins, and men and nations know that God is with them that fear Him.

We often see hanging on the walls of our homes an embroidered inscription framed, "God is Love." Did you think God is only love, and has no just wrath; though, to be sure, *that* is the result of love for our welfare? Ah, if you did, you don't know Him as He is, for He is a jealous God and a God of wrath when His laws are broken, — but

for our sake. Ah, you may well fear Him. Look at the children born in sin and innocently growing up in sin. See that young man paralyzed, the result of sin, of God's law insulted. See the penalty. Are you not afraid of sin?

I think I can thus illustrate the love and wrath of God contrasted: —

Some men were talking about their employer. One of the men had just come to work on the ranch; it was he who was inquiring about the employer.

"What kind of man is he?" said he.

One replied, "He is a good man and kind, but he means business. If you 'soldier' under him he will warn you and tell you he expects every man to do his duty; but if you 'soldier' again he will fire you."

God will permit innocent children to suffer by the laws of heredity, visiting the iniquity of the parents on the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him.

"He does that, you say?"

"Yes," I say, "he does."

"Well," a man says, "if God will do that

I will not give my heart to such a God as that;" and another says, "No personal God could do that."

Ah, but I tell you He does and is; and is worthy of the gift of our hearts and their adoration.

Was not your father worthy of your love, and yet he whipped you? — fortunately for you he did not spare the rod and spoil you.

You are under God's laws whether you will or not. You are born on this earth, which is His footstool. It matters not what *your* opinion is; but it matters everything to you whether you so live as to profit by obedience to God's laws. Just as you arrange your life to profit by obedience to certain laws of nature, so you should arrange your spiritual life, and moral life, to profit by obedience to God's laws through Christ.

When it is cold, you build a fire: you don't sit and freeze. It would do no good to say, "Oh, God would not freeze me to death, He is too good."

Ah, we have to acknowledge God's laws. It is our only hope, our only safety.

If it was all right to permit impurity in any form, or promiscuous copulation, why

does disease follow therefrom? Especially, when in the marriage relation no disease results, if both have been pure.

The world is in a sad condition. The sins of the parents have been visited upon their children's children, and these sins have been increased in their bad effects by the sins of the children themselves; so that the curses of disobedience gather upon the sons of men in an aggravated arithmetical ratio.

Alas! the burden is so heavy upon us that our only hope lies in the Burden-bearer, Christ; for Him to get under the burden and lift it off us, as He will do, if we ask Him aright.

Remember, too, that though God warns us that our sins will descend to our posterity, and though we suffer from the sins of our predecessors, yet God expressly says He will show mercy to those who love Him and keep His commandments. Our hope, then, lies in His mercy and in our determination to obey Him and to follow the words of Christ.

Alas, O man! Ancestral sins in your blood perhaps augmented by your own sins!

If God is so jealous of His rights and of

His laws as to permit an innocent babe to be born of consumptive parents and live a life burdened with disease, and to continue that punishment sometimes to the third and fourth generation, then I say He is a God to be feared, — whose displeasure is to be feared until you obtain and maintain that perfect love which casts out fear.

And furthermore, if God permits a lifetime of physical suffering as a penalty for disobedience to be inherited by the innocent, then I find it reasonable for my soul to believe that Eternal Hell after death is a fact unto those who die in revolt and disobedience against Him.

O come and make your peace with God: though He is a jealous God, yet He is full of love, and of great mercy to those who seek to please Him.

I have not come to condemn *you*, but to condemn *sin*; I come to bring good news, to give you hope, to declare salvation is free !

Don't you want to be free? God wants to forgive. Why hold back? God needs you! What can you say to Him? He will deny you nothing that is for your good!

For each nickel you give Him, He will give you a twenty dollar goldpiece. For the old bone he takes away from you, He will give you roast turkey.

Ah! has not Satan given you a drug to put you to sleep so you can't hear Jesus calling? Wake up! Wake up! or the insidious medicine will work and it will be too late.

Get Christ between you and the wrath of God.

God said in the first dispensation, "I am a jealous God and punish sin."

Christ said in the second dispensation those awful words, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you."

What prevents or hinders our getting and keeping this fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom? Three things occur to my mind as so acting.

First, people hear the way to God preached and believe it, but when it comes to accepting the conditions necessary, they hold back; especially as to confession. Moody says he never knew any man to be converted till he confessed. When a man sees his sin as it is revealed in the light of Christ's teachings and hears the instruction that he should confess

his sins to God and to those he has wronged, if any, he instinctively knows that he should do so. But sometimes Satan whispers, "Don't confess; what would the world say if you turned to be a Christian, and how humiliating to ask a man to forgive you for what you have done." Satan always proposes the opposite that God does: so did he to Eve.

Under such darts from Satan's mind confession seems as difficult a task as the lifting of a big rock. But it is not when you try.

It reminds me of a large pumice rock I have which was brought from the Colorado Desert. It is a large rock, and to look at it you would think it would take a strong man to lift it from the floor, but in reality it is so light a man can hold it above his head with one hand.

Sometimes when a stranger comes to my office, a stranger to the rock I mean, I ask him if he is feeling strong to-day, and if he could lift that rock. He accepts the challenge, and pulling up his sleeves stoops over, and, expecting the rock to require a mighty effort, is chagrined to find the rock almost as light as a feather.

Believe me, it is somewhat so with confession. After you have made up your mind to confess, it is not hard.

Another hindrance to the beginning of wisdom is that people are building high fences between them and Heaven, one line of fence after another between them and God, until some build five, some ten, and some more: and by and by, when they come to die, they will want to run to Heaven, but there are the fences! Some they can climb, but their strength is almost always insufficient to hold out, and they fall down exhausted; they perish, and their eternity is out of Heaven, where Hell is.

Some of these fences are impurity, unbelief, Sabbath desecration, deceit, selfishness, dishonesty, cruelty, and worldliness. Others have names you well know.

Oh! I call on you to-day to stop building fences between you and Heaven. They will likely keep you out, unless you change.

Turn, won't you? Repent, and God will cause those high fences to fall, so that your view of Heaven may be unobstructed.

Many are daily being deceived by deceptions worse than the gold-brick swindle.

Many are swapping off the way to holiness for the way to silliness. Oh, halt! I call you back! Come back to-night!

If we would avoid a way which is contrary to wisdom, let us ever remember to avoid collision with disagreeable circumstances: they will come, but steer out of their way. When you see a boat bearing down upon you, do you not change your course to avoid collision? Once I was driving with my family, and as we turned a corner in the road, behold! a runaway team was coming straight for us. I had just time to turn my horses out when the runaways dashed past.

So when disagreeable things come, turn out for them and avoid collision. Meet them with a smile inside, if not out. This is the key to joy. As Christ says, "Agree with thine adversary." Often silence is golden. Bridle your tongue, and with a Spanish bit. Do not talk back. It takes two to make a quarrel. A soft answer turneth away wrath. It is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong.

It is said that in the management and training of children it is wise to avoid having a direct breach.

My heart goes out to-day for those who are beginning the battle of life. To such I come to-day to tell them that lived religion brings prosperity.

Satan will tell you another story, as he told Eve in the Garden of Eden. But don't believe him. If it is not wrong to be impure, why should there be any physical penalty after impurity?

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Oh, here let me tell you a great counsel, a valuable bit of advice from the Book of Ages, to wit; Make a covenant with your eyes not to look upon one of the other sex in an unchristian way. If you practise that, you will bless the day you began to do so.

"Do I want to do this, or don't I want to do this? Will I pay this price of piety and get the reward, or will I not pay and have the license which leads to Hell? Which do I want, Heaven or Hell?"

Such is the soliloquy each youth has to solve. Oh, solve it right, won't you!

In the strength of your youth Satan tempts you to think, "What do I want?"

Instead, I beg you to think, "What does God want of me?" Ah, the Master needs you; won't you come to His help in the battle against sin now going on?

There is reason in God's laws for you: it is a reasonable service.

Pray do not let Satan mislead you and cheat you to believe in a lie. Remember the penalties of sin, and beware.

Satan will dazzle you if you do not look out. As a May bee flies about a candlelight, attracted by the light, dazed by the glare, intoxicated by the glamour, he flies nearer and nearer until he burns his wings and falls disabled on the table. Hundreds of young people to-night are flying about the dazzling, attractive glare of sin: to-morrow they will lie disabled by the poison of sin.

Ah, the better way is to know the danger of disobedience and the penalties of sin, and keep away from it. Make a covenant with your eyes and bridle your tongue lest it speak evil: also bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ, and you will win.

When in Christ, in the secret of His presence, in the fortress of His care, it seems as

it does when, in a mosquito district, you sit at twilight by an open window, at peace because the screen in your window keeps the mosquitos from annoying you: they can't get at you. But you can hear them buzzing away outside. So when in the secret place of the Most High you are safe; though you can sometimes hear the emissaries of Satan, the demons of Hell, whispering and buzzing their insinuations of sin, they can't get at you through the screen of Christ.

Yes, we had better take time to be holy, to talk more to God, to commune more with Christ. Prayer is the price of peace.

"I don't pray, I 'm so busy," says one. Then you will run into trouble. Sure!

Oh, youth, be careful of every step you take! A short time ago in Los Angeles, the morning paper bore the headline: —

"ONE STEP SAVED HIM."

Then it told about a judge who went to his door at night to answer the door-bell. As he opened it, a man fired a revolver, but

as he did so, the judge stepped one step and the bullet missed its mark.

One step toward God or toward Satan may save or ruin you.

When you are tempted, say to yourself, "Is it right?" If the answer comes "No," then it should really be no temptation. If it is not right it will bring no blessing.

God does not want you to be lost. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

Are you keeping correct time towards God? Are you doing right in *all* your ways? In a watch all the little wheels have to be adjusted just right in order to have the watch fulfil its purpose: It is so in our spiritual life.

Are you "on time" in your obligations to God? If we are not, then we fail to be of best use.

"Alas, I don't tell time right," says some one.

Oh, to-day let us go to the great Watchmaker and give ourselves into His hands and be repaired, so that we can be fit for the Master's use.

O ye daughters of Zion, clothed gloriously (as I would like to see every one, in good taste), God means the heart and soul to be arrayed in righteousness. We might be clothed in the finest of linen, yet that might cover a heart as coarse as crash.

When we look in the mirror to behold our God-given beauty, let us glance first in the looking-glass of Heaven, to see how our soul looks, and remember the beauty of holiness.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. God's penalties are sure, — sometimes swift, sometimes slow, but always sure. What is the use talking about the injustice of God, unbeliever? When you are cold in winter, do you stop to talk about the injustice of the thermometer? No indeed; you go and put on your overcoat.

If you believe the wrath of God is too severe, quit talking about it, get under the shadow of His wings: put on your overcoat. Pray to God to reveal Himself to you, and keep on praying until you are delivered from doubts.

Then the peace which passeth understanding will come into your life, like an orchestra

of Heaven playing harmonious strains of silent music, to give you peace and courage.

Get under the protection of God, and the strength of Heaven will be on your side, against which nothing can prevail. Then the forces of Heaven, the artillery, the infantry, and the cavalry, even the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, will be for you. You will thus have the law, the truth, and grace to work for you, and you will win!

TRUSTING GOD

TRUSTING GOD

A NEW year stretches out before us; the road goes over mountains and down into valleys. We shall be on the heights of joy, but will also travel into the depressions, yet these, if accepted aright, can be made level with the heights. "Ah! if thou didst but know the joy of an accepted sorrow."

As we stand on the threshold of a new year it is important that we give consideration to our trust in God, because during the year to come, if we trust in Him, we shall have a good year, a year of peace and joy and success. If we trust Him not, a year of oppressing disasters will befal us, or worse yet, we may be so forgotten of God as to be permitted to go right along in our own way, without hope in Christ, and be unchastised of God to bring us to a stop in our mad career.

But before we seek an explanation of what trusting God is, let us consider some things

that ought to be clear to our redeemed minds.

First, then, the atonement. Many there are who do not have an intellectual conception of what the atonement is. With such, combined with a spiritual discernment thereof, one is helped to have more confidence in God.

Then listen.

Thousands of years ago God put certain men at the head of his divine law-giving church, or permitted such men to be in authority over the people in spiritual matters. Melchizedek was the first priest of God, of record. Now God ordained through His said priests that a man must make sacrifices for sins he committed, it being understood that he must also, of course, be sorry. And so it was the church law, that for certain sins committed certain animal sacrifices should be made, doves, lambs, or oxen. This church law existed for centuries and for very many generations of people.

But finally, I believe that God saw that people would make the lamb sacrifices, but would not be sorry within, and He made a new dispensation, or law, whereby He Him-

self sacrificed the Lamb of God for all the sins of the world, and called on men to prove their sorrow by following the Man of Sorrows.

To that end He chose His most precious possession, His only begotten Son, Jesus, and had Him come to the earth as a little child and grow up to be about thirty, suffering as we have suffered and bearing agonies we have only seen afar off in our experience, and dying on the cross; after teaching people how to repent and be saved, by being sorry for sin and doing His words, without any further need of the sacrifice of animal life. Christ taught that what God wanted more than the blood of beasts was a contrite heart. Now do you see what "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" means?

As I said, for very many generations people had become accustomed to the idea that some sacrifice was necessary to propitiate God in addition to repentance. It was inbred in their minds. It was an inherited and re-inherited idea. It was a part of their very being, a vital factor in their understanding of spiritual things.

Recognizing this fact God made the new Christian dispensation to be able to fit into the old without friction or hiatus.

Now, atonement means at-one-ment, satisfying, harmonizing. So the atonement or sacrifice of Christ means that Christ was the sacrifice acceptable to God for all the sins of the world, and for our sins: and what we have to do is to prove we are sorry for our sins by accepting or believing in Christ, God's sacrifice, and by doing His words, which are the way and the truth and the life.

With this understanding of what the atonement means, our minds can be calm to proceed to trust in God through Christ.

Second, "There is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Now there are some that tremble at these words because they are not sure they have Christ. To have Christ is to believe in Him as the divine Son of God and to do His words: that is to say, if a man lives in the Law of Christ, or the Divine Law, he will be saved. But here we must be very careful lest we become bigoted, for Jesus says,

"Other sheep have I which are not of this fold." I believe this means the people that do the words of Christ without discerning the whole truth about Him, and without having any intellectual conception of the atonement. It may mean more in heathen lands, but I doubt this.

But what is that to us, since Christ says, "Preach the Gospel to every creature"?

Now we come to the third.

"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Ah! this is an awful scripture. How many times in the past have I stood in fearful awe of these words, knowing I was not holy!

But let us consider them.

I believe that in the second or moment in which a man has his heart focused on God through faith in Christ, he is holy, providing his heart is constrained by the fear and love of God into present obedience. For the devils believe! Bad men believe at times! And yet they turn not.

Now, if this said moment or second is extended by a growth in grace to several moments, to an hour, to a day, to a year, to the rest of your life, even unto the door

of death, why holiness is yours, and this text, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," need not alarm you.

But if you have not the consistent witness within that you are holy, wholly His, and if God's Spirit does not bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God, *then be afraid.*

Ah! many times would I have hidden away from God, could I have done so. Many times would I have put my hands over my eyes, could I have kept out the all-seeing eye of God. Sometimes I have been so miserable and ashamed I could find no relief save in penitential tears and absolute contrition in the fear and love of God; pained because I had not followed Jesus, but had gone out of the way divine.

This text is the balance of our Christian life: it is the index of our standing with God. It is at the same time a sweet assurance and a sharp warning. It is the alpha and omega of texts.

With such an introduction, let us now consider what it means to trust in God.

Before we can trust God we must know

Him, through Christ. "I know in whom I have believed," joyfully cries Paul.

"I cannot trust Him," says a friend, "I do not know Him."

How, then, can a man know God? The answer is very simple. Do Christ's words, whatever He says to do. As Mary said on the occasion of the first miracle, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

Thus do, and you will come to know God. Your sincerity will find Him. Christ will make you acquainted with Him, and if you keep on doing Christ's words the acquaintance will grow into friendship and knowledge, and you will be able to understand how Abraham was God's friend. Then you will be able not only to know God, but to tell others how to find Him. It is good to know God.

To be able to trust a man you must know him; you must summer and winter him. So to be able to fully trust God you must know Him by the law of growth in grace in order to have full confidence in Him.

It is beautiful to have confidence in God. It brings contentment. Our past experiences with God are written on the scroll of

memory. Unroll the scroll for the good of the soul! What saith it? Thus saith it: When there was no peace, He gave me peace; When there was no joy, He gave me joy; When there was no hope, He gave me hope. Again, it saith: As the bed is rest for the body and music for the mind, so Thou, O God, art rest for my soul.

Such are the fruits of the experience of trusting in God.

If we trust a man with money we have confidence in him that he will return it. We have confidence in his honesty and ability. I knew a man who said of his Mexican vaquero, "I would trust that man to take ten thousand dollars over the mountains." So if we trust God, we must have confidence in Him that He will do as He says. Have we? Have we ever put Him to the test? Have we ever let Him into our hearts that we might try His way? Have we known Him long enough to judge of His ways and laws?

Now, we cannot trust Him fully unless we know Him well. We cannot know Him well unless we obey His commandments and Christ's words. But listen: if you have

heard some man highly spoken of for honor and ability, you feel inclined to trust him, even though you have had no personal dealings with him. So with God and Christ; you have heard others testify that "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

You have heard others, beside me, testify of His goodness and mercy. Oh, therefore, if thou be one who knowest Him not unto trusting Him, accept Him and entrust unto Him your heart, your life, your eternity! He calleth thee, He needeth thee, — the Master hath need of thee. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die unsaved?

If we trust a man, he pays us for trusting him. So God pays us with blessings, if we trust ourselves to Him and bow our heads and hearts to His will.

Trust Him with your sorrow, your care, your pain, your disappointment, your loss, your distress, your bereavement, your weakness, your temptation, and your future; trust Him and lay your trouble down at the feet of God and do not pick it up again! Ah, there is the test of true trust! Will you pick it up again or leave it there, believing?

Art thou an invalid? Thou canst, as did Paul, rise to the height of glorying in thine infirmities. God will help thee to rise. Perchance infirmities brought thee to God.

Are you trusting God with your future? If you are, you can enjoy life as you go along; not wait until you have made so much, till you are married, till you are well, till you have been elected to office; but enjoy life now. Get in right relations with God, so you can.

Very many people are living on the edge of excitement, living in the future. Worrying about this and that, not trusting God with this and that. Borrowing trouble, borrowing trouble! What would you do if the fancied trouble never came? "I should not like to pay for all the trouble I have borrowed," said a friend. Such people are mortgaging the present, and so lose peace; they gain nothing when the future comes, because they have no nerves left to meet it.

Trust Him with the present; the best way to show it is to be grateful for His benefits now. "Count your blessings." Compare your lot with that of the slum-dwellers.

Trust Him with the past. Divine forgive-

ness can make the past as a white piece of paper, without condemnations.

In trusting God it is well to remember one feature of this law divine, and that is that God overrules things that to our finite minds seem immutable, helpless and hopeless, into matters surmounted, overcome, accomplished and accompanied with hope. To fully comprehend the advantage, safety, and security of trusting God, we should not lose sight of His overruling power and His willingness to use that power when He sees it is for our good.

And remember that He is also able to take away from us that which might seem to us to our advantage, because in his greater wisdom He sees that for us to keep it would work to our harm.

This principle of overruling works two ways.

Trusting God means to trust when you have nothing else to depend on save God. There are times when neither strength, nor money, nor friends, nor influence, nor education can avail. Then God avails and prevails. When all else fails, faith fails not.

Trusting God will tell to your credit on the last day.

See that man with head bent forward, looking down as he walks. I saw him the other Sunday in Santa Monica, his head full of plans, and beating his brains. Doubtless his plans were all right, but he was not trusting God with them. He was depending wholly on himself to fulfil them. If he had taken God into co-partnership he could have done all his part without so straining his brain; for faith in God and trust in Him would ease his thought and lubricate his plans.

See that woman. Something in the past disturbs her peace. Her face looks sad and a great weight of depression hushes her happiness. She did not do as she would be done by.

Oh! let us be wise and learn by observation to do right and trust in God. If it hurts us to do right, still let us do it.

Have you a lawsuit, friend? Then trust it with God. Leave it in His hands. Leave the outcome with Him. Then your life will not be worried out, like a lighted candle being blown by a draught. But to do this,

a man himself must be in the right. So to be able to trust to God, a man must be right himself.

I will tell you something that will help you to remember to trust in God during the days to come, to remind you that you have the privilege of trusting God. Every time a half dollar comes into or leaves your possession, be reminded of the fact that on that coin it says "In God we Trust;" and once in a while please ask God to remember me in mercy and blessing.

Have I said enough? Are we really trusting God? Do we grasp the meaning?

To trust Him means to believe that He will bring about everything to your best advantage if you put your case in His hands; that He will do better for you than you could do for yourself; that He can make your life a life of beauty and a joy forever, — to you and to Him!

Consider this! It will revolutionize your life! Consider this, you who have no earthly attractions calling you on. Heaven will make up for it in spiritual gifts! Consider this, you who are so lonely; in God is companionship. Consider this, you who have all

things; that without confidence in God, you have nothing.

As for me, I am tired of handling my own case. Disappointments have made me come to believe that God can handle it better for me. I have come to the end of my conceit. "Lean not to thine own understanding" it is written. In the last words of Christ, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit," I see hope for you and for me, and wisdom, and I cry, "O God, into Thy care I commit my case, my life. I trust Thee, help Thou my lack of trust."

Let us trust God! Can we? Aye, a thousand times, aye! Heaven is with us to strengthen our determination, to reënforce our resolves, to come to our help and rescue. Come nigh, angel of the Most High! Help me to do right so that I can fully trust!

Trusting God is living: not trusting is slow death.

What will we get if we do not trust Him?

THE STILL, SMALL VOICE OF GOD

THE STILL, SMALL VOICE OF GOD

Read 1 Kings xix. 1–12, Romans viii. 13–16, John xvi. 7–14, and Hebrews iv. 12, and Matt. xxvii. 57.

From the creation of the world, the voice of God has been prominent in great events, great to the world in general and to individuals in particular. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. Again and again in the creation He used His voice, and all Nature obeyed.

Sometimes He would speak from Heaven, from a cloud, from a mountain, from fire, and generally through the early centuries or thousands of years related by the Bible He spoke in a great and mighty voice. Only once in that period does the record mention His speaking with a still, small voice. The Old Testament presages many of the things that came to pass in the New, and this mention of the still, small voice in the Old finds its

greater fulfilment in the days since Christ, when the Comforter came.

Now before Christ, God's commands to men required an outward rather than an inward observance, at least more stress was laid on the former until after Christ's coming. Before Christ, outward sin was condemned: but Christ condemned sinful thoughts even, unenacted, inward sins.

Before Christ, men had to make animal sacrifices for their sins, they had to perform vows in public; with Christ's personal sacrifice, the altar's victims ceased, and the contrite heart placed upon the altar Jesus Christ took their place.

"Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience rest or take away the stain;
But Christ, the Heavenly lamb, takes all our sin away,
A sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they."

When Christ came, the audible voice of God was heard at His baptism by the physical sense of hearing. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," and again at the Transfiguration sounded the same great voice and from a bright cloud came the same words, with "Hear ye Him" added. But

after Christ's ascension to Heaven there is rarely any record, I believe, of any audible voice of God to the physical ear, up to this our time (though Paul and John heard it); but instead of the audible voice to the ear there was firmly established by God the still, small voice of the Spirit, He Himself, which was audible to the soul and to the consciousness, of which it is written, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." This great gift to men is the source of assurance of hope in Heaven, of a conviction that we are born again and into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now, Adam, Moses, Samuel, Ezekiel, Daniel, John, Paul, and others heard God's audible voice. God seems to have chosen to speak aloud on great occasions, when great good could be done thereby, or when He saw it was needed, perhaps: and it may be it will be heard again during the centuries that are left unto this world. But great thanks be to our God, any one of us who will can hear His still, small voice in the soul day by day.

I believe Satan also spoke out loud. I think he did to Eve and to Christ. It may

be he did to Martin Luther at the time he tempted him in his room, when he was writing those words which were to revolutionize the world for God, when he threw his inkstand at the Devil.

This spirit of God, the third person of the adorable Trinity, speaks peace to the soul when we repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks in a still, small voice. It is as real as if it were audible.

In the experience of human lives men hear two voices in the soul warring against each other. What is the explanation of this? Satan was once an angel in Heaven, trusted and used by God. He disobeyed and was thrust out of Heaven; ever since that day, he and his legions of evil spirits have sought to undo the work of God in the souls and hearts of men.

One of Satan's most common methods is to imitate God's voice. Longfellow quotes an old adage, "Satan apes God."

Remember how Satan said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die," and how in the temptation of Christ he said to Him, after he had taken Him up on to an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the king-

doms of the world and the glory of them, "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Christ said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Here we have contrasted the two voices, good and evil.

Thus we see that Satan speaks to men as well as God does. We all know this; in various forms of temptation he whispers to draw us away from God and to plunge us into sins headlong, to his victory and our defeat, to our sorrow and remorse and awful punishment. Is it not sadly so?

Now these two voices in the soul; how can we distinguish between them? Generally our Christian conscience quickly tells us which is which; but indirectly the Bible gives us wisdom here. Sometimes Satan imitates God so closely that it is necessary for us to try the spirit to see whether he be of God or the devil. If the influence of the spirit, if the result of the listening to the spirit's voice brings us peaceful, calm, restful, assuring thoughts, and inspires us to gentle, loving, tender communion with Jesus, we can feel that the voice is of God. If, however, the results of listening to the voice at first

are peaceful and quieting, but soon give rise to doubts and warring, confusing thoughts as to whether we have done right, and accusing convictions arise in us, then we can believe we listened to the wrong voice. We should recall the scripture, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

I think we should distinguish between the conscience and the before named supernatural voices. I believe certain poets have called the conscience the voice of God. It seems to me the conscience is the natural voice within man, and the voice of God the supernatural: the conscience is what guides us naturally (*con* and *scio*), but the voice of the Spirit of God is what we know with supernaturally. It is a distinction almost as delicate as that between soul and spirit.

The conscience is an element of the mind, the still, small voice is an element of the soul. The capacity to apprehend the voice of God is an element of the soul.

The soul is inherent in man from the very beginning of man. The spirit is what God breathed in the nostrils of Adam. By this breath the soul became immortalized.

The soul is natural, the spirit supernatural. The soul without the spirit would have been mortal; it became immortal. God breathed into it the spark of immortality. The soul is a natural element, the spirit a supernatural element. When man became a living soul, the natural soul was spiritualized and made eternally alive.

So it seems to me.

It is this spark of divinity that gives man peculiar power over the animal kingdom.

The conscience is sometimes called dead, but the spirit of God never dies. According to our Christian cultivation our conscience is awake or sleeping. A man's conscience forbids him to work on Sunday. Another's does not, because he may have been born in Africa's wilds. The conscience tells us what we should do after we know what we ought to do. The African's conscience tells him what he ought to do according to the limits of his philosophy of life.

The conscience is an element of the mind, but it is awakened by the coming of the Comforter, and so it is allied to the Holy Ghost, if we will. As Paul says, "my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy

Ghost." The conscience may be weak, undeveloped, evil, defiled, even seemingly dead, but it can be strengthened, developed, ennobled, and made alive by the power of the Holy Ghost. Paul speaks of "conscience of the idol," or, as I understand, the conscience a man has who worships idols: as in the African's case above, the conscience is weak or almost dead, but the coming of the Comforter makes the conscience alive.

Have you received the Holy Ghost?

The still, small voice is equivalent to the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, God.

The word conscience is not used in the Old Testament. Of course it is a Gentile word, but was its equivalent used? That used to seem strange to me. After the Comforter came, when Christ ascended, the word came to be used, "of a good conscience" and the like. It seems to me the conscience was in man, but the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, awakened it into new possibilities through Christ and Christ's resurrection.

The Dictionary says, "Conscience is the power or faculty in man by which he distinguishes between right and wrong in conduct and character." Yes, but it has to be

christianized to make it trustworthy; this the Holy Spirit does when sought.

But the voice of God, the still, small voice of God, not only gives us wisdom, but guidance and warning and instruction that do not come within the province or abilities of the conscience.

To hold our thought to our theme, let us again remember that while there have been times in the history of the world when God for some especial purpose raised His voice to a grandeur most wonderful, yet in our days He speaks in a still, small voice to the soul. Before Christ, much of worship was outward, the visible sacrifice of the lamb without blemish; but when the Holy Lamb was sacrificed for the sins of the whole world and forever, came the stress of the contrite heart; it changed in a measure from the outward to the inward. "The Kingdom of God is within you." Once in the olden days God spoke in a still, small voice as if to justify our believing His voice in these latter days.

The still, small voice of God counsels us to be unselfish, to cultivate the soul, to do good deeds, to imitate Christ; and whispers that we shall get credit for these things, and

that a great reward awaits us in Heaven if we do them, as well as great rewards in the inner consciousness here on this earth.

I remember having heard Dr. E. S. Chapman tell of two sons in Ohio. Their father had died and left an estate which was to be settled up gradually, until at the end of five years it was to be distributed equally to the two sons. Each year one fifth was to be divided.

One of the sons had heard about California and believed in it: he wanted to get there; he wanted to escape the rigors of winter. So he sent on his first part of the money to California and bought a piece of land, and began to have it cultivated and planted to an orchard by an agent. Each year he would spend more money on it, until at the end of five years he had water developed, a house built, the orchards bearing, and the ranch stocked and fenced. When at the end of five years he came to California his home awaited him, complete in all details of use and beauty.

But the other son, when his money came in from the father's estate, took it and with

his young friends scattered it abroad in foolish living. The habit grew on him and so at the end of five years he had about nothing to his credit. He, too, at the end of that time went to California, but nothing awaited him there, no ranch, no home, nothing beautiful to attract him. He had lost all.

So will it be, comrades, when we leave the Ohio of this world and go to the California of Eternity.

The still, small voice assures us of eternal life as we go along day by day. We who are born again have eternal life; we have begun it now; it lasts through eternity.

I have heard of an infidel scientist who was dying. He had said nature was enough to supply a man's needs. But he lay dying, and he gasped for life. A Christian friend of his came to his bedside and said to him, when the dying man stated he wanted to live, "How long do you want to live; another year?" "No," the man said, "death is so dreadful I want to live always, to never die." "Does nature give you all you want?" "No," the man replied, "I want life." "Well,"

the other said, "become a Christian and you will live forever and be satisfied with death, since, to the Christian, it only begins the life of Eternity in Heaven."

Ah, the still, small voice speaks peace to the soul when dreadful death heaves in sight like a black ship bearing down upon you in the fog to crush and destroy.

Have you heard the still, small voice of God in conviction and conversion? No? Then rest not till you have heard it. "Seek and ye shall find." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

Do you know your sins are forgiven? Do you feel the need of a Saviour and yet seem helpless? "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Look and live. Believe and be saved. He is here to forgive and bless.

Have you heard the still, small voice? Has the Comforter come to you? Into your soul and into your life?

What is it that makes a noise in the soul? that drowns the still, small voice of God? that hides His face and veils His presence?

Ah! to many the warring noise in the soul is caused by wrongs done and not righted, by a lack and neglect of confession. Oh, confess your sins to God out of a repentant heart, and to one another, and undo what wrong you have done. That stops the noise in the soul. Then you can hear on the telephone the voice of God as it comes to the ear of your soul.

Let us get near to God, so we can hear His voice. Let us thank Him before we go to do anything. "I thank Thee, Lord." "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Let us commune with God more. Let us talk with Him more often.

Do we do so? "Not very well." "Not very often."

Then we cannot complain if we do not hear His voice often enough to recognize it.

"It don't work," you say? Ah, but you don't get near enough to hear Him. Stand up close to the 'phone, put your ear close to the receiver of His law and the words of Christ. Then you will hear it. Are you like a little child in your faith and trust toward God, in your simplicity?

Get nearer to God. Then He will hear and answer, and you will know His voice. Standing afar off, can He hear you? Can a man in New York hear you speaking in Chicago? Nay, except by 'phone, and you have to pay to use it. So with God; get near Him in simplicity and sincerity, or piety, which is the price of using the divine telephone.

Yes, God has a telephone; you have to pay to use it. The charge is purity, unselfishness, humility, faith and works, combined with Christlikeness. Ah, but it *is* worth it!

Again ask Him to speak to your soul. Can you expect an answer from one of whom you do not ask a reply?

When we pray, we should ever wait for an answer in the soul from God.

Let us keep God on our side. "How can we?" By always keeping on His side. You see, when we have wronged a man or have been mean to him, we do not feel we can go to him and ask a favor; that wrong stands between him and us. We must first confess to him and ask him to forgive. So it is with God. Let us ever keep on God's side, then we won't have to stop to ask forgiveness, but rather so live that we can com-

mune with Him at once and hear His still, small voice in guidance and counsel.

The voice of God will guide and counsel and comfort to-morrow as well as to-day, I have faith to believe, and so I rest in faith, and faith brings rest. That sweet voice will be with me on my last bed, if I am faithful, and "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" will bring me peace. Woe be unto me, or any, if we hear not this encouragement at the time of the transition of the soul.

"To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart;" "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Come! let us humble ourselves. Let us be where the still, small voice can be heard, where we can receive inspired thoughts to glorify our days. Come! let us adorn ourselves with purity, unselfishness, and humility, that we may be fit for the coming of the Comforter. He speaks, though Conqueror, in a still, small voice, Himself "the best symbol of humility."

Oh, come! Let us follow the right voice and heed His calling; He is calling, calling

yet! He will lead you into pleasant paths and introduce you to joys unthinkable. The paths may have briars now and then by their sides, but if you keep right in the path, they will not prick you.

Acquaint yourself with this voice and you will know the voice of your Shepherd, and will follow Him in safety to the home above.

Come, O great God! speak to each of us to-day; come and direct our paths, and give us the comfort of Thy presence! Forgive, and come.

O may Thy still, small voice graciously guide us with Thy counsels, with Thy words of comfort and harmony, echoes of heavenly strains, drops of wisdom from afar, lights of glory illuminating our way, guidance from the great Guide, soft peace pillowing our weary heads!

O God wilt Thou not speak peace to us just now?

THE ECSTASY OF HOPE

THE ECSTASY OF HOPE

WHAT makes me feel sorry for a man is to hear him say, "Oh yes, you talk about Heaven and God; I know just as much about it as you do, and no one *knows* anything: it is only surmise."

What nonsense!

A lawyer might as well go to a surgeon and say, "Oh yes, all the surgery and surgical knowledge you have is imagination; I know as much about it as you do, and no one knows anything about surgery: it is all speculation."

What! Have I sought God these seventeen years, yet know nothing? When He Himself says He is to be known? Then indeed am I a numskull.

That which also makes me feel sad for a man's ignorance is this: A gentleman takes up the morning paper and reads, "Henry G. Wolf was arrested last evening on a charge of having embezzled three thousand

dollars from the Overtrust Land Company of which he was the trusted treasurer. His prominence in church circles makes the arrest a very sensational one."

The excited gentleman then exclaims to his wife, as his glasses drop off his nose, "Well, now, just listen to that! The old hypocrite! And he has been posing as a saint and a leader in charities ever since we came to the city! Well, that lets me out of religion. The churches! Pshaw! These church people are no better than any one else, and not half as good as we are, wife. *I* never stole a cent!"

And the wife adds, "It is just disgusting!"

The next Sunday they do not attend church.

Now the trouble with these people who so condemn religion, the Scriptures incidentally, the churches and professors of religion, is that they forget that these same Scriptures and this same Christian doctrine specially declares that there will be wolves in sheep's clothing in the churches; and then when something like H. G. Wolf's case occurs, they forget that it is according to Scripture.

But know this, Mr. and Mrs. Scoffer, that were there not some sincere people who fear God and obey His precepts pretty well, the church could not hold together. It would soon go to pieces. Yet see how it lasts!

It is the same with a lodge. Did you ever know a lodge without its black sheep or one that was a little off color?

Another man I feel sorry for is he who says, "Oh, I have a peculiar kind of religion. My religion is to do as I would be done by; that is all." That is good, friend, as far as it goes, but if you have not been born again and your past sins forgiven, that will not carry you through the pearly gates. You have got to have something besides what you do to carry you through; you have got to have faith in Christ. Listen, — in love I tell you, — I am afraid your religion, if it is only what you have mentioned, will not satisfy you on your last bed.

Ah! "if death were the end, death would be deified and worshipped;" but instead, men fear the grave unless they are saved by Christ, and the consequent release from dread takes away that fear, casts it out, and hope come in its place.

The present fashionable wile of Satan is to make it popular to say, "I have got beyond the fear of death, and have grown more interested in life's problems." Be not deceived. Remember what the serpent said to Eve.

Life would be unbearable were it not for hope. At times we could not stand our life had we no hope. Aye, many die because they just "give up," which is an abbreviation of "give up the ghost." They have no hope to call them on, to make life worth living. So they die! And in death they find a horrible life eternal.

Is death the end?

When we speak about hope to-day, we know whereof we speak, and are constrained to believe that a man without hope is hopeless and homeless in so far as Heaven is concerned; and every one is concerned in regard to Heaven, whether he admits it, or not.

Hopeless and homeless, without a deed to a home in Heaven. Alas, alas for thee!

But I bring you good news! The deed is ready to be executed. God will sign it, if you will only give Him your heart in payment.

Is hope in your heart?

"Yes, the ecstasy of hope is mine," says one.

Have *you* hope?

"Nay, I have not hope," another says.

Why, what is the matter?

Oh, get hope! Hope comes as a result of repentance and giving your heart to God through Christ, resolving to lead a Christian life.

Christianity is essentially hope, a religion of hope; under its inspiration something beautiful beckons us on all the time, more and more until the perfect day. This system of hope fulfils the natural instinct of accumulation which is within us, for by it we are taught to lay up treasure in Heaven, and are assured we receive credits for all the good we think, or say, or do. It fulfils the hope of gain.

This system, organized by the Creator, promises delights in Heaven far more desirable than Mahomet pictured. His were sensuous. God's are spiritual, intellectual, ethereal, heavenly; and yet, remembering our physical condition and appealing to that, God promises us the tree which on itself

bears the fruit of all trees: and this example of what is in store for us in Heaven to delight our physical condition is chosen by God as the most refined of all physical desires, — the fruit of the tree.

Hope! I love that word.

Hope is the ladder to joy. Ah! I have found a good thing! or, as they say in these money days, I have found a good bargain, to get much for little, — to get hope for being good, and the hope will increase in value as the years go by. But have I told the whole truth? Is being good a little thing? No, it is not; it is a great thing to do, — to be good. Yet when we have attained some degree of goodness, the hope we have seems far greater than its price, — piety.

If Satan ever tempts you to get blue, do not forget to call in hope to your rescue and quickly have regard to the recompense of your reward; if you but keep the Holy Spirit in your heart, you can drive temptation away through the power of the Holy Ghost. That is the way to drive away the blues. That is the use of hope.

The hope of harvest makes the ploughing

easier: the hope of Heaven makes our tribulations bearable.

Hope is wages; get full hope and full wages by doing full Christ-work.

When an orchard or vineyard gets diseased and will not bear fruit, the orchardist goes among his trees and digs down around the roots to see what is the matter. The root-knot, or white ants, or something may be the cause. But he digs down and saws off the knots, or puts lye on the ants, and all goes well. Let us also saw off the skin-knots and put lye on the little ant-faults at the root of our life-tree. Ah, then we should soon have hope and bear fruit in Christ.

Prune-trees near the coast do not thrive. Cut off the tops and bud them into apricot-trees, which will do well. Then the tree thrives. So, cut off your useless, idle, wasteful sins and bud on Christ, and you will then have hope and bear good fruit.

The Christian Life, the Life of Hope, is the only life worth living, but let it be remembered that this life does not preclude, or forbid, the intellectual life, the business life, or the professional life.

They can be lived together in company. The Christian life sanctifies the other, which of itself is already good, but not the best.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that the intellectual, the professional, the business, or the homespun life are not worth living without the Christ-Life; yet with it they become glorified and glorious, lives for which it is good to have been born.

"Oh yes, if you live this Christ-Life, this Life of Hope, you have to give up everything else worth having," says a very mistaken person.

"Give up?" Why the Life of Hope is the very ticket to admit you to all attractions that deserve the name.

"Give up everything worth having?" Why! you only give up those things that are not worth having, that do you harm.

Look at that man's face! You can read his controlling thought. There is no hope of Heaven written there!

Look at that woman's face as she looks up from the reading of an unworthy novel! Is hope written there? No, but discontent and evil. Look at her face again. Would it do for a Saint Cecilia at the organ? If we

work for the soul, we must quit reading those things which hurt the soul.

The countenance is an expression of the condition of the soul, just as the eyes are its windows.

When you are about to have your photograph taken, spend all the preceding hours with God. Get filled with His Spirit. Then sit, seeking to please God and not the world, oblivious of the artist, remembering only God. Have hope in your face; then it will be beautiful, even though you are homely.

What dims our hope?

Here is one thing, and also a way to escape its influence.

If you know that any one, near by or at a distance, is thinking evil of you, you can overcome the influence of such thoughts and drive them away by asking God to bless the one or those so thinking. Such a prayer is a safeguard against evil thoughts. God will not let the evil reach you, if you so pray. Sometimes when you have hope, your environment is not congenial to hope, and may be disastrous to it, unless you look out, and so pray.

Also, if, alas! you yourself ever think an

evil, unkind, or uncharitable thought of another, begin at once to ask the forgiveness of God, and then pray for the one your mind went out against, that he may be blessed. Thus you can drive away from you this evil, which dims your hope.

Now confession is an important element in hope. Hope hesitates till confession precedes it. Hope comes from God, and to receive anything from Him, we must become reconciled to our Lord, for *all* have sinned. The reconciliation to God requires confession. We must confess our sins to God and to those whom we have wronged, except in the rare case when such latter confession adds fuel to the fire.

You know how it is with a person; when any one has accused you falsely or done you other harm, you can never feel really reconciled to such a one until he has asked you to forgive him, confessing that he was in the wrong. Confession drives the evil away, for evil cannot bear the presence of Christian sincerity.

Neither is a complete reconciliation possible until the one at fault makes reparation by an acknowledgment, no matter how much

the innocent party may desire a reconciliation. Now this is an explanation of the philosophy of confession preceding reconciliation between God and man.

Hope is like a perennial springtime, when Nature is promising what she will do for mankind and fulfilling the assurance each day, giving a dividend in the growth of the grass, payable every twenty-four hours.

Hope ever whispers to the listening ear encouragement and contentment. As music touches all the strings of the human heart, so hope thrills into joy all the feelings of the mind, and so sweet is the joy that it leaves happiness and delight behind. Hope from Heaven is ever new; a brand-new hope born in the mind of God is wafted in telephonic message from above the azure sky each time you call it forth by a heavenward thought. This message, secret unto us, coming on the wings of Love, awakens our hope; and a rhapsody is born out of our joy to rise to God in song divine. I will trust the Lord, O my soul!

Melodious harmony, as the echo of harps angelic, pervades my being; it is the peace which passeth understanding; it is hope.

Would you jeopardize that joy by disobedience?

What is this joy?

It is the child of hope.

And what is this hope?

It is the reward of the cultivation of the soul.

Beautiful hope! thou dost dwell in the green dale of peace. The hills of faith surround thee, and the river of love waters thy glades. Wilt thou not dwell also in my heart? — make it beautiful as a valley in May, and plant in its garden sweet flowers of faith, and have a spring of living water bubbling up within me, a fountain of joy?

How can we get this hope?

The path that leads to hope is the same that leads to God through Christ, to salvation, to divine forgiveness, to being born again, to knowing God for yourself, to reading your title clear to a mansion in the sky.

Take the road to either, and it will also lead you to hope.

When you are climbing the hills of hope, plant your feet carefully upon the slope, the rising ground, that nothing may deter you from reaching the ecstasy of the heights of

hope. Take with you the alpenstock of determination.

Let this hour be the Cape of Good Hope to your Soul, which, when sighted, gives you an assurance of a harbor, the haven of Heaven.

Do we earnestly desire to win in the matter of hope versus no-hope?

Our case is in safe hands.

God is the judge, Christ is the advocate: the best attorney is on our side. The angels are *our* witnesses. You see we have a just judge, the best attorney, unimpeachable witnesses, all on our side, and if we wish to be good, nothing can win against us.

If we are vacillating and weak, and surrender our case to our adversary, Satan, without trial, we deserve to be hopeless.

But even though we be weak, yet, having a right purpose to be good, if we bring ourselves before the judgment seat, confess our sins, and plead mercy, our case is won, for we have a judge that cannot be bought, who loveth mercy and knoweth justice to do it.

"Hope on, hope ever."

But what say the Scriptures about hope?

The word hope is not used by Christ, nor

in the four Gospels, in our present sense; but after the resurrection the word hope became a permanent word in the Christian's vocabulary. Hope and resurrection of the dead! Ah, Christ's death gave hope to men! Thenceforth the word hope was on the tongues of all men who know Him.

The Bible says we should rest, rejoice, and abound in hope: that we should hope in God, in Christ, in "His Word," and hope in His mercy: that we should not be ashamed of our hope, and be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear, as the Scriptures teach.

It is also written that "the hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish." The hypocrite's hope also shall perish, and Job likens it to a spider's web, as futile as a gossamer and of no strength.

We are taught therein that when we have hope we are secure and safe, happy and blessed.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Many times have I, discouraged, proven this proverb; but then the moment I went to God with my discouragement, He would say

to me, "Have you no hope to cheer you? No Heaven to look ahead to, if faithful?" "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord," I would say, "my heart is now better, its sickness has passed away."

It is written, "against hope believed in hope," and again, "hope continually."

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure."

Faith hath its peace, love its warmth, but hope has its ecstasy. Love "hopeth all things."

Hope is a door, ever open, a place to enter for something good.

Disobedience kills hope.

If you have no hope you are in prison, jailed by Satan, and your sentence will last for eternity unless Christ pardons you out, as He will, if you desire it.

Here are two scriptures worth remembering:—

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Prov. xix. 18.

"For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion."

So that you, being alive, have a chance.

But to return to our hope in Heaven. God gives us hope through the Holy Ghost: therefore we have to get the Holy Ghost in order to get hope. God is the Father of hope and as Holy Ghost He giveth it us.

The Lord Jesus is our hope: aye, a lively hope by His resurrection from the dead. If you are without God in the world, you have no hope.

"We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

Yes, patience in doing the words of Christ is essential to getting the Christ-hope in the heart.

"For we are saved by hope," it is written. I think this means that our faith by which we are saved is kept alive by hope, and so hope saves us.

Let us keep this hope, then, unsullied to the end, and have a full assurance of it.

Let us take refuge in this hope; it is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast.

A friend of mine says he would not want to live without this hope of Heaven, for it would be like the cattle to be without any hope of everlasting life, where we can be happy forevermore.

When everything else fails, the hope of faith fails not. Job is the best example of that, save Christ Himself; but among the living there are excellent examples of it. Depend alone on God for your hope and consolation; then you will never lose the peace that passeth understanding. When disagreeable things come, you will then say, "That is all right, that does not interfere with my hope or my divine consolation."

Hope is like expectancy: if you make a journey or take a walk, never enjoyed before, you are ever alert to see something new; so in your pilgrimage to the City of the Sky we may ever expect some new vista of God's goodness and remembrance of us, some fresh visitations of His grace, and new exhibitions of His power, since each day our way to Heaven is diversified by varied blessings and temptations.

There is something especially excellent in possessing this hope in God, for the

experience of having it becomes more and more blessed until the perfect day when you are ushered into the realms of bliss, — when you fall asleep in Jesus and awake in Heaven. If you get into politics it often happens that you become very tired of them as you grow older; perhaps some one gets more popular than you, and it leaves you a disappointed politician: if you secure great book learning you are sometimes surfeited with the weariness of it: but it is not so with serving God, and abiding in hope, and getting religion.

What is getting religion like?

It is like the sun bursting through a cloud on a cold day, warming you with its warmth. Your sins are the clouds, the Saviour is the sun. Call on Him for forgiveness; He will dispel the clouds and warm you with His divine presence. Oh, let Him in!

Some have hope of a temporal nature calling them on: for instance, success in business, in society, in your profession, in your temporal work, but such hope of success will not avail in time of failure, distress, sickness, or death. *That* hope won't carry you through all the vicissitudes of life, but hope in Christ *will;* such a hope dies not when distresses

come. Tribulations cannot snuff out the brightness of the candle of the Lord, — our soul's hope; only disobedience can do that.

Hope *thou* in Christ: hope not in the world or in the power thereof. That is to say, have not your highest, brightest, and best hope dependent on what the world can give, but on what God through Christ can give.

If a famine comes to a man without God, where is his hope? But if he has hope in God, then even though the dry year come he has hope, and can be happy and at peace.

> "The Heavenly hope is all serene,
> But earthly hope, how bright so e'er,
> Still fluctuates o'er this changing scene
> As false and fleeting as 't is fair."
>
> *Heber.*

If you are going to get all your hope from this world instead of from Heaven, I will tell you what it will be like, — you will be paid in counterfeit money. There is only one *real* hope, and that is "hope thou in Christ," the Christ-hope.

That hope can extend to and include things temporal as well as spiritual. That hope opens the door to success, spiritual,

physical, mental, and temporal. I used to think God could do wonderful things for me in a spiritual way, but it took me many years to realize He could run a woolen mill better than I, and to trust Him to manage temporal matters for me.

> "The bells of hope ring in my soul,
> Their chime is sweet,"

the hymnal sings. The church bells ring; do they bring hopes to your heart? "The mighty hopes that make us men" as Tennyson says?

If you have no hope in God, you are at war with God. I bring you an offer of peace. The terms are piety. The way out is Christ. A declaration of peace to your soul will immediately follow your obedience to His words and acceptance of the terms. In addition to peace, God offers you hope and Heaven, and an escape from Hell.

If you do not accept God's offer of peace, my instructions are to declare that war will be continued until you repent or die (in love I speak), and death without God means Hell with Satan. I speak in plain terms, yet in love. Oh, seek the Lord while He may be

found. His spirit will not always strive with you. *Won't* you accept His terms, end the war, and enjoy the fruits of peace with God?

There can be but one outcome if you persist against Jesus. God, who holds steady the solar system, is able to enforce His laws to the utmost. To-day, He comes like a loving father and says, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

What is the trouble? Why do ye not all know God? Ah! methinks the trouble is there be some who forget to live the very first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me," which, as Christ explains it, means "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Ah! the trouble is that there be some of us who love God with half the heart, with a fraction of the mind, with a part of the soul, and with too little of our strength, which last appears to me to refer to that strength which comes from practised purity.

And so our spiritual life is half-hearted, blunted, blurred, weakened.

Oh, let us turn to-day and take refuge in obedience to the First Commandment, for therein is our only hope,

When your hope is full, you will know the meaning of the word Ecstasy.

BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

California orchards are very complete. In the East you hear a farmer speak of his apple orchard or his pear orchard; but on a California ranch you can very often find in the home orchard almost any kind of fruit, fig, nectarine, olive, loquat, almond, or walnut.

To be sure, this cannot compare with Heaven's fruit-tree, which bears twelve kinds of fruit each month in the year, but still a California home orchard is a beautiful possession.

Now, men are like trees; some men bear good fruit, some bitter, like the sour-apple-tree. Some are so good that, like the tree of Heaven, they bear nearly every kind of good fruit and are always in bearing, every month in the year. Some men are so evil that their fruits are always evil, and their influence never fails to be bad.

It is by men's fruits that we are to know them, so that thus we can tell whether we can trust them, whether they are proper associates, whether their influence over us will be uplifting or degenerating. And we need the help of God's Spirit in discerning, because it is written that even Christians, indeed, can be deceived, but this is the exception which proves the rule. To summer and winter a man is the old rule to find what he really is.

Fruitage is the only test of discipleship, it is often said, and it is the best test by which we can measure our own standing with Christ. Our influence at home and in the community, — is it good?

An apricot-tree in the home orchard is known by the apricot, and the peach by the peach. So among men, the reliable man is known by what his neighbors say of him, — the majority of his neighbors; and the evil man is known by his acts, which make his reputation for evil.

While the test of discipleship of Christ is fruits, we should beware lest we conclude that great things, as the world goes, must follow discipleship. The widow's mite dis-

proves such conclusion. In an old burying ground in New Hampshire, on an ancient tombstone, are these words: "She *done* what she could." Could any one do more?

All must bear fruit, and we of little talent are very apt to like to talk about the rich young man who lacked the one thing needful, and forget to meditate on the man with one talent, who hid it in the earth, so it bore no fruit.

Awake, ye of one talent, ye are the majority! Ye have power to transform the earth unto righteousness! Do ye lack a leader? Is not Christ sufficient?

One-talent people correspond to the common people: and remember it is written, "The common people heard Him [Christ] gladly." Yes, we of one talent have a responsibility as great as the ten-talent men.

God loves you, ye of little faith!

Abraham Lincoln said, "God must love the common people, He made so many of them."

"What can we do?" Do ye thus inquire, ye one-talent people? Do ye not know the power of an example, the influence of a soul hid with Christ in God? Do ye

not understand how ye, having nothing, yet have all; how ye can especially obtain glory for Christ?

And ye, O preachers, have ye not neglected those of one talent and preached the rich young man, when there were a majority of one-talent saints and sinners before you? — even if you did wish to bring out the point of the one thing lacking.

A minister was called to a new charge, and on his arrival in town, one of the Church Board met him and said, "Now, Mr. Newcomb, I wish to give you a little advice about preaching here. You will be wise if you avoid preaching about a bad temper, because Mr. A., one of our largest contributors, has a terrible temper, and you will offend him. Do not speak about money, because one of our board is very rich and he does not like to have such matters spoken of. And, I beg you, never refer to temperance, for Mr. B., although not a member, gives a good deal towards the church, and he is not as temperate as he should be. And then" —

Here Mr. Newcomb interrupted and said, "Well, what shall I preach about, then?"

The other thought a moment and replied, "Preach about the Jews, — there is n't one within twenty miles."

This story is told to anchor in our minds the thought that we should always preach that which needs to be preached.

Let us consider how this text applies to the various Christian denominations. There are many of these, and some are not so kind-hearted to others as they should be.

We should remember that we all have peculiarities of mind, condition, and temperament, made so largely by heredity and environment; and we cannot all expect to look at things at the same angle; but if our general purposes are good, and we do not heinously disobey, we are worth consideration, and so are all such.

A Quaker and his wife were conversing about how peculiar people were, and after each had mentioned the peculiarities of various ones, the Quaker at last said, "And now I think of it, wife, *thee* is a little peculiar, too."

A Congregationalist friend of mine said that when a young lad he really got it into his head that no one but a Congregationalist

could go to Heaven; and he told how surprised he was when he grew up and went to the Y. M. C. A. meetings to find that others of different denominations knew and experienced just what he did.

A Christian is one who resembles Christ, no matter what other name men may call him.

But we should be careful not to be bitter against the denominational idea. Kindly read 1 Corinthians xii., xiii., and think. There it is written, "And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." This is not necessarily an approbation of various denominations, but a justification of them. Thus the Bible itself furnishes the best comparative illustration or simile of the denominational idea.

It is also written in Acts x. 35: "But in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Lest Satan should tempt any one to think, "What, then, is the use of missions? why should we send men to foreign shores and to our own people?" I reply, "Because Jesus commanded it;" that is enough.

Moreover, would such a scripture as this Acts x. 35 make us less loyal to our own

interpretation of Scripture? Nay, it should not. We should not hesitate to speak the truth in love (at such times as good can be done thereby), or to point out mistakes and errors in interpretation of scriptures, or mistaken allegations of creeds. Where should we be, if Martin Luther, Knox, and Wesley had been silent, and others in our day?

All denominations have their differences, each from each, yet if their fruits are decidedly Christian, we should not criticise them too sharply. We should be merciful and charitable, and ready to give all the benefits of doubt to others; yet we should not be so lax as to lose the blessings of *all* the blessed doctrines from Genesis to Revelation.

In some denominational experiences of life we should remember the scripture where John forbade the man who was casting out devils in Jesus' name because he would not follow their number, and what Christ replied to John in Mark ix. 39–41.

Again, sometimes we should recall Gamaliel's advice, as recorded in Acts v. 35–39.

Again, remember that Christ said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold."

Selah.

But if the fruits we bear are not so good as they should be, shall we not begin to-day to graft into us better fruits and to bud into us more excellent ways?

Let us see if we cannot with God's help. We can.

Perhaps we can give some spiritual suggestions for so doing.

When you were converted and arose and went to your Father, did you confess your sins after repentance? When you asked God to forgive you, did you have true humility, like the Prodigal Son, and say, somewhat as he did, "Make me as one of thy hired servants"? All these things are necessary.

"Make me as one of thy hired servants" gives me great comfort to repeat often; it helps to keep me humble and contented with my tribulations.

Sometimes we try to approach God in this way: "Oh yes, I will be a Christian if you 'll find me a nice genteel place to work in a bank, with a real good salary," or, "Oh yes, I 'll be a Christian if you 'll make me well, or do this or that." God cannot be met in that way.

But the prodigal had the right spirit, and the father went out to meet him. "Before

you call I will answer," says God, so anxious is He to meet you halfway.

Just think! you have sinned against God and Heaven: but God calls you back through the forgiveness Christ offers, — unforgiven, you are lost. You have no hope against Hell, but the Father offers mercy. To get a chance to be forgiven, when you realize your sin, are you not willing to use a grubbing hoe or a washtub, if need be? You cannot be in a ride-in-a-coupé frame of mind when at the mercy-seat.

And the prodigal "arose" and made up his mind to quit his meanness and go to his father and accept any conditions, if only he could be forgiven and accepted. Won't you do the same towards God?

But God will satisfy you with adoption, not servitude, after you have exhibited the right spirit. As the father in the parable killed the fatted calf and put the robe of equality on the repentant son, so God has given you His only begotten crucified Son, and He will bring you into the equality and companionship of the sons of God through the Elder Brother, if you adorn the doctrine of the Master.

"Make me as one of thy hired servants." "They also serve who only stand and wait," doing what little they can. Invalid! let this encourage you. And yet some invalids, through the distribution of tracts or the example of Christlikeness, can do wonders for God, and for their own Eternity.

A certain man had been ill, oh! so many weary years. Over twenty summers had cast their shadows over his disappointed hopes of recovery. "Oh, to be freed from pain!" he said, but still the pain remained. He resisted his cross in his mind; he did not make "a joy out of an accepted sorrow," but one day he awoke to the righteousness of the resolve that he would not wait to be happy until he was cured, but that he would be happy right now. God speed him.

There was a certain man who was unhappy in his constant loneliness; he had not a sufficiency of the companionship of God and Christ; he resisted his condition in his mind.

Another man was unhappy in his lowly condition, which remained the same as the years rolled by.

"Alas," he said, "the years bring no

changes. Shall I never have power, but always be as I am, a menial?" and he resisted in his mind. But both of these men one day awoke to the folly of waiting to be happy until their hopes were realized, so they determined they would be happy now and under the present conditions. God speed them both.

A certain man was sitting under the shadow of a great sorrow. It was the crucible in which he was to be tested. He did not accept it as God's way of the Cross to humble him and to cause him to cultivate the soul. "Via Crucis, via lucis." He also resisted in his mind. But he heard these other three testify of the joy they found in accepting their sorrows and in not waiting to be happy until their sorrows were taken away. He, too, thus learned to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done," and found his sorrow a thing of the past. He meant what he said. Thy will be done. God speed him.

Sometimes when we are very weary with the burden of ill health or poverty, loneliness or distress, domestic and financial, or alas! all combined, Satan takes advantage of our weakness and whispers to us not to stand it

any longer, but to resist it; and he alleges all sorts of reasons, except the right ones, for our being in the fix we are in. Ever ready to insinuate that blame should rest where it does not belong, he advises us to kick.

Now comes Jesus and He says, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." It don't do any good to kick against the unpleasant and galling conditions of life. The more we kick or complain, the worse it will be for us; if they are incurable, they are chastisements which must be borne with grace.

If you go to a thorn-bush, and, barefoot, keep kicking it, the more you kick the more the blood will flow. Stand off and stop kicking, and the suffering abates.

When next you are tempted to complain, remember the thorn-bush and the bare foot; it will help you to accept the condition which smarts you.

Satan says, "Kick, kick!" God says, "Do not kick against the pricks."

O God, we will accept Thy chastisements, we will accept in the right spirit the unpleasant conditions of our life, knowing that in saying amen to them, so be it, is the royal road to the celestial city. And we will rise

to greater heights and say, "I thank Thee, Lord."

It is hard for you to do this, you say. It is. But ask God to help you, and you can do it. That is what religion is for.

I have found my Lord; so I am reconciled to the sadness and sorrows of the past; and, with God's help, I *will* be with those which are to come.

What fruit are you bearing, brother? Fruits of the Spirit of God? Are you "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy?"

If we bear no fruit, we are dead to God, and unless we change we shall be lost: nay, we are lost now. Do you recall the parable of the fig-tree? You know the owner of the place, when he saw the tree bore no fruit, told his foreman to have it cut down; why cumbereth it the ground? said he. But the foreman said, "Let me try it, sir, won't you, for another year; let me dig around it, and then if it don't bear fruit it shall be cut down." He was like the Germans, whose proverb says, "Sleep three nights before you cut down a tree."

The foreman pleaded for that tree's life, lest it be lost; and so Christ pleads with God for you, O thou who art out of the Kingdom, lest you be lost in Hell. One year more! One year more! And then perhaps, if thou bearest no fruit, thou shalt be cut down! And lost in Hell, to suffer forever!

Once in New York city I showed a friend some inscriptions I had written for a public building. At the end of one of them were these words, —

"Men, women, children, obey these words.

"If you do, you will be happy.

"If you do not, sorrow will come upon you."

My friend read this and he said, "I like it all but the last line; I should leave that out."

"No," said I, "it is true and the truth shall stand."

People don't like the thought of divine punishment. Yet the fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom.

Hell is. We have as much right to go to the Bible and cut out that word as we have to go to the dictionary and cut out the word

"fire." Our cutting it out does not stop the existence of fire.

In conclusion, what is your influence? Is it for good? Is your fruit satisfactory to you against the last day? If not, had we not better make it better? If we are not bearing good fruit, had we not better graft on a better kind? Or bud into our way the best way, — Christ's way?

If we know a better variety of fruit than what we bear, should we not secure it, until "naught in our heart condemns us?"

We should surely "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" that is, if we have repented of our sins, we should live accordingly.

So let us do, and may the consequent peace of God abide with us all our days. Amen.

WHO WAS CHRIST?

WHO WAS CHRIST?

CHRIST was the first great *Christian* teacher that the great God sent to earth. I am going to explain to you who belong to the real Christian Church. It is not the Protestants, nor the Catholics, nor the Baptists, nor the Episcopalians, nor the Methodist Church; but the real Christian Church is made up of all those from each of these I have mentioned, or any other, or none, who believe in God and Christ, and who are trying to be Christians who mean business. That is the church.

I said Christ was the first great Christian teacher. He taught others how to teach; John and Matthew, and Luke the great physician teacher. Then came Paul. They taught others, and others taught others, till we come to Luther, Thomas à Kempis, and Wesley, to Eliot and Edwards, Moody and Munhall, and your good teacher and mine.

What is their message? Repent and be saved. The same as Christ's. Turn from

sin and do right in the fear and love of God.

Now a word of warning. You may meet in your life some that will say, "Oh yes, Confucius, the great Chinese teacher, taught men to forgive, and Buddha and other teachers taught men to be good." Yes, that is true, but no man save Christ ever rose to such grandeur of love as the instruction which bids men not only to forgive their enemies but to pray for those who are mean to them, as well as to do them good. That is divine. It is superhuman. Remember Job, who received not the blessing until he prayed for his enemies.

Christ was divine. He will conquer the world. He needs you to help Him. You can help Him by letting your light shine.

Who is this Christ, the Son of God? What manner of man is He? Ah, man never spake like this man. Man never did as He did.

When He was arrested before His crucifixion, one of His friends standing by drew his sword and cut off the right ear of a servant of the high priest. What did Jesus say? Did He call out, "Come on, Andrew,

come on Peter and John, clear them out. We'll settle this"? Oh no! You and I might have said that.

But Christ said to His friend, "Put up thy sword." Christ was without revenge or resentment.

Again, when the time of His death was near, and thinking of the agonies He must suffer, He prayed to God, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." "Mould me, O God, according to Thy purposes, not mine," is the highest of wisdom's heights.

We might have said, "O God, must I suffer all this agony, this ignominious crucifixion, after I have tried so hard to please Thee?" We might have said that, but Christ knew God knew best, and He said, "Thy will be done."

Again, when Jesus was crucified, while He was in agony of pain, while the cruel spikes were torturing His feet and hands, what did He say? Did He say, "Well, I give it up," and fall into a stupor of despair? Or did He cry — as you and I might cry if we were to be hanged on the scaffold, innocent of the

crime of which we had been charged — "I am innocent. I declare unto the world my innocence"? We might have said so, but the Christ, even at this moment, forgot Himself and prayed for others: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Oh, to-day say, "Thy will be done," and "Mould me according to Thy purposes, not mine;" and although you may not have received any Christmas present tied up in a handsome box, yet in bending your will to God's will, you will receive one so great that you will not need the little box. Though men may forget you, God will not; and to-day He gives you that great Christmas present, Christ in the heart. Let the Christmas bells peal in your soul, and go forth to sing His praises. Amen.

Where is Christ now? To-day? In the bright land sitting at the right hand of the great God, or riding the white horse, or going here and there attended by His bodyguard of redeemed men who were found without a fault.

And what shall we be like, if faithful to the end and we go to Heaven? What will our spiritual bodies be made of? We know

not; but this we know, that we shall be like Him!

"God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

What is a spirit? A spirit is an intelligent form without a corruptible substance; since the Scriptures repeatedly affirm that God has form (inasmuch as portions of it are named), and that He is a spirit. What is that substance? We know not; but we know that if we die in Christ and reach Heaven, we shall awake in His likeness, — we shall be like Him.

That is enough. The substance of our spiritualized being will be like Christ.

Amen.

And Christ is coming again to this very Earth of ours!

"Say, will He find you and me still watching" and loving His appearing?

Will He find faith on the earth? May it be answered with a glorious affirmative in Los Angeles.

LOVE DIVINE

LOVE DIVINE

1 John iv.

On Sunday we come together to get our natures in harmony with God, Christ, and each other. So many things transpire in week days to disturb our equanimity, we get tired and are tempted to get cross. People are so thoughtless and unkind. I wonder why they can't always do what we would like them to do. I wonder why *we* can't always do what others would like us to do. Oh yes! week days need the benediction of a Sabbath. The Sabbath settles many a quarrel, the Sabbath brings harmony when discord prevails on Saturday.

How many church organizations could hold together without the calming influence of the word of God?

Now there is love human, and what is it? It is preference. I like this man better than that. It is a kind of selfish, although

proper love. He is so noble, his eyes so frank and true. I could marry him and live in a hut on Pine Mountain. Oh, she is so sweet and gentle, she is such a true woman, nothing masculine about her. I could marry her and work my fingers off to earn a home for her.

Now this kind of love is much to be praised. It will make noble sacrifices and prove itself heroic. But yet you love such a one to please yourself. It is because it delights you.

But suppose your beloved dies in the hut on Pine Mountain, or in the cottage by the river? Suppose misunderstandings arise?

Suppose you are not married, and feel at times, oh, so lonely; and lack the fulfilment of this human love: for the human heart is made to love and desire congenial companionship. What, *what* are you going to do in such cases?

If your love is lost, or never found? You cannot force the highest type of marriage.

The way to get married is to get married in the Lord; and if you want to get married, ask God in prayer *if it be His will* to find you a wife or a husband.

But we clearly see that human love is not to be depended on. It may not last. The angel of death may carry it away.

And if you have and keep this human love until the sunset of the seventies, yet you can love your husband or your wife better for loving God best. And this love human without the love divine, how is it going to bridge over the grave, — if it is all the love you have got?

Is love divine your guiding star? Is it your bridge over to Eternity's shore of peace? Will you get the best of the grave, or the grave the best of you? Which will have the victory?

So it is very plain to see that love human is not enough to be fortified with to fight the battles of life and death.

But to-day I come bringing tidings of a great and glorious blessing, "Love divine, all love excelling."

This love will give you joy and a perpetual honeymoon, whether you are married or unmarried, or whether earthly love fails; when you are lonely you will yet have a spouse and some one to adore. You do not need to be a nun to be "the spouse of

Christ," and since in Heaven there is neither male nor female, the manly heart can go to Christ as well as the womanly heart. The Virgin is not needed in adoration save as an example of fidelity to God and obedience, in that she was called blessed among women.

And now, lend me your whole hearts, while I give you the well known definition of this love divine, when the human heart gets it.

It is the "desire to bless."

What does that mean?

It means that as God is love, and as every law of His is a desire to bless us, so if we love God with all our heart and purposes and obey all of His statutes through Christ, we shall grow to be like the nature of God in His attributes of love, absorbing them in *our* natures, and awake some morning to find we have a portion of this love divine, this desire to bless. See John xvii. 26.

It means when you go to the breakfast table, to go with a spirit or a desire to bless the others by your presence and mind; when you go to school, to have a desire to bless the school and teachers, to make it harmonious; when you go to the factory, a desire to

bless those with whom you come in contact. Around the evening lamp, pitching hay, or in the counting-room, the same, always be governed by a desire to bless. "Love divine, all love excelling."

The difference between love human and love divine is that one is the desire to *be* blessed while the other is the desire to bless.

Love human may die, but love divine lasts and is sure to live forever.

Love divine is the Christ-love; it is the kind of love which is meant by the expression "brotherly love." That is the power that builds up churches, and makes them powerful for good. Moody illustrates this in a story about a boy who lived in Chicago and whose family moved away from the part of the city where the Sunday-school he attended was located. Still he continued going to his old school which meant a long tiresome walk.

They asked him why he did not go to the Sunday-school near by their new home. "Oh," he said, "they love a fellow over there."

People will go where they can get love and be loved.

O friend, go to God, and the love He will shed abroad in your soul, and the radiance and glory of His presence and blessing, will fill you with satisfaction and contentment.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

So if we get this love divine, we have passed from death unto life. Oh, how great and important a matter this is. Awake, my soul! Awake! Awake, my will!

If we all get this love divine, what heavenly harmony it makes. If the occupants of one home get it, what heavenly harmony prevails there. It is a foretaste of Heaven; it is peace on earth and good-will to man, love divine, the desire to bless.

If you get this love divine, you get within you a "well of water springing up into everlasting life." A well in biblical language often means a spring. In Moses' time, in the wilderness, they began in their distress to dig for water, and they exclaimed, "Spring up, O well!"

Have you ever seen in the summer mountains a bubbling spring coming up with great vigor, cool and pure? Well, if you get this love divine, you will have in you a constant

source of refreshment; like a bubbling spring will be the water and influence of the Christ-life. You will have within you a well bubbling with joy, ever flowing; and when you are weary, you can there find joy.

Be without this love, and ye are "wells without water."

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Love divine, a desire to bless.

This love divine, this perfect love, casts out fear: it takes away the fear of death. Great love, O that we may be wise and possess it!

What else does love divine do for us? See. "Hatred stirreth up strifes; but love covereth all sins;" again, "it covereth a multitude of sins." Think of it, — we shall not be remembered by our sins, but by the love we now have. Hallelujah!

Come I not with good tidings?

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us." Do you realize *that?* If we get this love divine, God's love is made perfect in us. That is

the purpose of God's love, to bless us; and in gaining His love in us, we see it brought to its fruitage, it does that for which it is intended. Wonderful thought! Our little hearts the places of fruition of God's boundless love, the place for its full and complete development! In other words, God needs us. Amazing thought! His love is boundless, and He needs all hearts!

Such a greatness in such a little space. It is just as the still, small voice represents the mighty voice of God, "the best symbol of humility."

Moreover, thus is our love made perfect, if we get this love divine. 1 John 4, 17.

What else among the countless things does this love divine do for us?

Listen!

"He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

If we get this love divine, which we can get by accepting Christ, by doing the words of Christ, by believing in Him, *then* we can live in this love, which is dwelling in God, and not only that, but God dwells in us.

It is as if we lived in a country, and that the National Spirit of the country lived in

us. A poor and limited illustration, but who can approach the greatness of the truth?

Love divine means a desire to bless. A simple illustration of what love divine is for the children to take away in their minds is that of a mother bird flying to her nest on joyous wings with a fine worm in her mouth for her little ones: ah! that is the meaning and emblem of love.

Love your children, love your husband, love your wife. Love your associates. Love your superiors and your inferiors as the world goes. That's the way to be happy. To have within the "desire to bless."

You know Christ says that on loving God and your neighbors as yourself hangs all the law and the prophets. You see Christianity is a religion of love. This love divine tells the story. Have you it? Then you have religion. Have you it not? Then alas, alas! But you *can get* it.

Many people and teachers make religion disagreeable, and drive people away by making it too much a system of "don't do this and don't do that," on the basis of the first dispensation of "Thou shalt not;" but Christ's way of teaching religion was more

the way of love divine; *do* this and *do* that, and thou shalt be accordingly blessed. He did not undo the law, but he suffused it with love. Witness the Beatitudes.

A good way to discover if you have this love divine is to ask yourself the question, what is your influence among the people of your home and the community in which you dwell? Is it for good? Is it for noble manhood and womanhood, noble and blessing-bearing? Man, dost thou ennoble women by thy presence and ways? Woman, dost thou ennoble men by thy presence and ways?

Now we want to inquire into those ways which stand in the way of getting this love divine.

To maintain this love divine, we have got to get where Paul climbed — to learn to be content in whatever condition he found himself. Fighting wild beasts in the arena, shipwrecked, in prison, teaching religion, sleeping on the ground or in his hired house, beaten with stripes, hungry or not, it was all the same with Paul. He had *learned* to be content. He was not naturally content. When the thermometer goes to 100, we

don't like it, but after ten years' experience we say, "That's all right, it will be cooler in a day or two."

What are your purposes, friend? When the great searchlight of Heaven is turned with its all-seeing rays upon them, will they all pass muster, will they all look lovely? Please make them so.

If your "hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness," and your whole energy is bent on getting this love divine, you can bear any insult, any aggravation, any disappointment, any cross. Why? Because these things accepted only enrich your store of love divine. They put no bars up against your heart's desire. They only bind you closer to the experience of the possession of love divine.

Come, let us accept this love divine to-day. It is a gift to us. It is given freely. Can I give it? No. I can only lead you to Him who will place it in your hands.

Come, let us go to Christ, believe in Him and try to do His words, and the gift is yours.

Repent, and be saved to-day.

O Great God, our Father, to whom we pray, great Spirit of Heaven, First of the Trinity, in whose image and likeness we are made; Thou to whom Christ prayed, hallowed be Thy name, — hallowed be Thy name.

As now the seraphim in Heaven are praising Thee, saying, holy, holy, holy, — wilt not Thou tune our little hearts to sing Thy praise?

O come, great God, to-day, and take away the clouds and the burdens; come with *Thy* power and set us all free from the power of sin, that we may get a closer glimpse of Thy greatness, and of the depth of Thy mercy and of Thy love. "Have mercy on our weaknesses." O reveal now Thyself to the ones that are waiting. O honor their call, as their cry for Thee goes beyond the stars. Ease their pilgrimage as, weary, they journey to the New Jerusalem. Be with them; Thy loving presence is enough. And as they go down through the valley of death, we know to our joy that Thou wilt still be with the justified.

A LOST LAW, OR, THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

A LOST LAW, OR, THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

James i. 25.

THINK not that I come to bear tidings of a law that once brought blessings to men, but which now is irretrievably lost. Nay, I come with the correlative text, "Seek, and ye shall find;" with the explanation that although this law is but little known, yet the efficacy of its virtues is as great and grand as when it was first proclaimed centuries ago.

We hear of arts that were lost, and then found again. It is in that spirit I speak these words concerning a lost law. The famous Toledo blades were once the admiration of fighting Europe; the steel was so mysteriously tempered that its strength was preserved, while a wonderful bending-without-breaking suppleness was retained. It was claimed that men had lost the art of so making them, until some one rediscovered the fact that they were tempered by dipping in pure olive oil.

In the city of Limoges in France, a long time ago, there was an art known as Limoges enamel, which consisted of enamelling beautiful pictures on copper. For generations this art was lost, and only in comparatively recent times has it been refound.

But what is this rediscovered lost law, this "law of liberty"? It is a law under which you are free from depressing care, by which you can cast your care on Christ; it is to be free from the power of sin, since Christ has conquered sin, and, having Christ within, you also can overcome evil. It is to be free in mind; not to have the brain under pressure nor your body under wrought-up conditions, but to be calm within; since trusting in God, which is a condition of this lost law, brings about this wonderful peace.

This liberty can be had alone of God through Christ, for no one else has it to give. It is divine, and must come from God. It is liberty gained through obedience to the law of Christ.

The opposite of liberty is slavery; therefore if you are not free in Christ, alas! are you not more or less a slave of Satan? And more or less a slave to the power of sin? And it is woe unto such slaves.

Liberty without restraint is not liberty, but license, and license is danger in disguise. If you say, I like liberty without law, be not deceived, for there is no liberty without some law. Would a sea captain go to sea without his instruments of navigation, his compass and quadrant? No, he must keep his course within the restraint these instruments dictate; yet such restraint is a blessing to him and will bring him to his port. Sail the seas of life without a Bible, without God's law, and thus be free from saving restraint, and how canst thou find thy way to Heaven through gales and tempests? Be not deceived, thou canst not.

This law of liberty is sometimes expressed by the word sanctification; it is also designated "the second blessing." Many religious misunderstandings are caused by the fact that while people are arguing and differing they sometimes mean the same thing in their souls, but use different words to express it, and not being used to such differences of expression, they are perplexed and sometimes offended.

"The perfect law of liberty" is a law, just as we say the law of gravitation or that gravi-

tation is a law. But note this, — the law of gravitation may be hindered, stopped, or interfered with. A boy throws a ball; by the law of gravitation it would fall to the ground; another boy catches it and hinders the law from working.

Not so is it with the law of liberty. Note this: it is called "the *perfect* law." If you seek to do the precepts of Christ, no one can prevent the law from acting in the resultant blessing of liberty of the soul. If a man is killed, like Stephen, while serving God, this law is not hindered, but proven in a still more glorious way; the man is promoted into a security of perpetual enjoyment of the law of liberty.

We need this liberty of the soul. By it we can overcome physical and temporal oppressions, and rise above the disappointments, attacks and assaults of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. We need this liberty! Oh, we do need it! We need it every hour; moment by moment, we need it.

Let us again remember that this liberty is a law; it is the result of certain action on our part. It is definite. We say steam produced by heating water in a boiler is a law. So

if we seek Christ and do His words, we shall have liberty. It is a perfect law. The Spirit of the Lord God has come upon us, anointing us "to proclaim liberty to the captives" bound in sin and in infidelity. The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, which rang out the independence of our country to the world, bears the scriptural words, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." This is temporal liberty, but I bring you still greater good tidings of that perfect liberty of the soul which shall secure you blessings not only in this world, but in the world to come.

One way of telling whether you have this law of liberty is by examining yourself to see if you love *everybody*.

Another way by which you can better tell if you are in this divine law is this: Christ has said that if a man love Him and keep His words, God and He Himself will come and make their abode with him. Not only come, but come to stay! Have they come into you? Have they stayed? No? What's the matter, then? The law never fails; its action is perfect. Ah! it is *we* that fail to keep the words — *we* that are imperfect.

"Yes," says one, "they came, but they did not abide. It was my fault. I did not continue the conditions of their coming. I did the words of Christ, but I did not *keep* doing them."

Such people know God, but He is so far away from them! He is not near. Oh, keep Him near by keeping the words of Christ. Let Christ be the one vital principle of your life. Seek Him, talk to Him, obey His words, and He will come near you and usher God Himself into your life, and they will abide with you and proclaim liberty unto you, a new and necessary divine declaration of independence to your life.

So come and be free.

I will tell you one reason why it is good to be free — to have the freedom of the Spirit of God, — because then you have God, — the Triune God, — Father, Saviour, Comforter, a sympathizer, one who knows what you know. Ah! that is a great thing to have. When people accuse you falsely, slander you unrighteously, forsake you, misunderstand you, think you are a coward when you are brave, oh! then to be able to know God and to say to Him, "O God, Thou knowest, and

I know. With Thee to sympathize and believe in me I can stand their sarcasm." Aye, a man can do all things when Christ strengthens him.

Hundreds of sufferers there are to-day who are misunderstood, and receive no compassion from men. It is awful to be without sympathy, human and divine. But to be without human sympathy, and know not God, oh! that *is* awful. But if such a man knows God under the law of liberty, he can find rest in such a prayer as this: "O God, Thou knowest my pain, my suffering in the body, which the world cannot see. Though my cheek is pink and my eye bright, yet the fearful pain is there. My associates understand me not, and think me lacking in spirit. They pass me by like the Levite, but Thou art my Good Samaritan, Thou dost pity me."

Aye! it is good to have God!

So felt the Southern negroes in ante-bellum days, when in groups about their cabins they would sing in their physical slavery, in a chorus of spiritually free voices, the words: —

"Nobody knows the trouble I 'se feeling,
Nobody knows but Jesus."

One thing we should carefully avoid in seeking the law of liberty. We should beware lest Satan tempt us by saying, "You could make a success of it if your physical condition were not so weak: just think what you could do if you were in perfect health, or if you were in different circumstances or surroundings, or had a better education." That is Satan.

Ah! friend, we have got to find the law of liberty, and be free under our present conditions and surroundings. We may not have rations of boned turkey and guava jelly when we become soldiers of the Cross. God wants soldiers who can fight on hard-tack when the fight is upon us. He is training us for the skies. He wants no more citizens in Heaven who would do as Satan did, who once was an angel of light, disobeyed God, and was cast out, only to be an enemy of Heaven.

God wants soldiers who will mind the first time, and *now*, no matter *what* the conditions.

We must not pray so much to have our circumstances changed, but more that we may have grace to accept them.

"Accept them"! What power in that word "accept"! It has been said, "Ah! if thou didst but know the joy of an accepted sorrow!"

Some one says, "If I were in different surroundings I could get hold of this liberty you preach, but I can't as it is. I have so many cares and sorrows. If I could have time to rest and have it easier, with more quiet to myself and less anxiety, I believe I could get hold of that liberty."

It may be so; but, friend, my counsel is that if you love the Lord, He will not permit you to be tried beyond that which you are able to bear; and that your only hope of finding this precious liberty is to expect to find it where you are, by cultivating the ground whereon you stand, by bending your will till it blends with God's will, and by saying "amen" to your present troubles. Under that heavy burden lies the lost prize, the lost law of liberty. In that way you can find it.

And, invalid, awake to the bright side of thy condition! It is no small privilege to live with eternity ever brought so near thy mind, owing to thy weakness. The strong in

their strength are apt to forget to lean on the Everlasting Arms.

But who ever got hold of this perfect law of liberty? Oh, thousands have, from Enoch down to some humbler heart here. But I will tell you a good example: that is Job!

Every living soul ought to study Job and know Job's experience, just as much as and more than he should study the multiplication table. In the dark days a remembrance of how Job won the fight will be like a reinforcing army to you in your distress.

Well, let us consider Job.

Now Job got into the law of liberty. Listen to how he did it:—

Job was a good man, pure, honest, benevolent. He was practically a man of God, as far as any outward signs went. God loved him and wanted him to be so completely good that He could trust him anywhere, and that after death He could have him to reign with Christ in the Heavenly Lands. So He doubtless told Job again and again that he must rid himself of some of his secret faults. But Job had one fault that he did not get rid of, I think.

God had tried loving counsel; it failed. There was nothing left but chastisement. And Job was so good and brave that no small calamity would effect the removal of the stain on his heart. Nothing but a severe succession of calamities would avail. Here they come! Leprosy, his wife turned against him, his children cruel to him, his cattle and herds taken from him, his friends reviling him because he had preached religion and told them how God would stand by His own and make their paths those of pleasantness and peace, and *now*, — how had his God treated him? Ah, *that* was harsh for poor Job. See him, foul with disease, bereft of family affections, his property gone, and his one hope in God assailed! O God, come to his help! O God, remember how much Job proved for Thee! Remember his alms and his honorable career!

Now wait a moment.

I do not believe that leprosy came on Job because he had sinned against the laws of purity. I think it was like the blind one in Christ's day, of whom He said in reply to an inquiry, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, but his blindness came upon him

that God might be glorified by a miracle which was to follow, — his cure.

So with Job. Innocence, or practical innocence, sometimes suffers, but out of the suffering grows the graceful tree of consecrated usefulness.

"Sorrow never leaves us where it finds us."

Now why do I tell you about this? It is to remind you that when tribulations are about you, and the blue sky does not come your way, that very likely it is for your best good, and out of your distress a blessing will be born.

"'T is against my sins He fighteth," we sing in our hymn.

Yes, out of sorrow shall blessings be born. All the pearls in my casket, — where did I get them? In merrymaking and profit-taking? Nay, — the things that are most priceless to me I got down in the shadows of sorrowing, in the depths of distress, when I trained myself to say "amen," and rose above temptation.

But Job is sitting there, foul with leprosy, deserted by his family, bereft of his property, and in the presence of some reviling infidels who have watched his career. Now they are

delighted to see him in deep distress. "Ah," they think, "his God has forsaken him; it is better to think as we do and be infidels." And they turn to Job, and say, "Why don't you curse God and die?" And Job in his agony of mind may have been tempted of Satan to accept their advice, but God loved Job and He was by his side; He would not suffer him to be tempted beyond his ability. So the angel of the Lord that encamps around those that fear Him said to Job in a still voice, "Cease not to praise God, Job, this is for some wise purpose."

"Curse God and die," they cry to Job. In this spirit, men in the store, on the street, or in the train, speak to many a man when seeking to draw him away from his vows to Christ.

"Curse God and die;" but God says to Job, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," or words of like avail.

But still these wicked men taunt Job with his leprosy and his bad luck, as men foolishly say, and drive poor Job almost distracted; and then, in the supreme test put upon him, the Lord Himself, I think, came to Job and said to his soul, "I will stand by you." At

that, Job in his misery of body faced his revilers, and cried in a loud voice, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Ah, that was one of the most majestic moments since creation!

Just think what faith and trust it required for Job to say that; but still his leprosy is upon him. It don't go away. His besetting sin evidently was not a lack of trust in God.

Take off your shoes, we are approaching holy ground!

Now, as Job feels in his soul the presence of God and realizes the companionship of our Lord, he gazes upon the reviling infidels before him, and a great pity for them, ignorant of God, comes upon him. And out of that pity love is born, "love divine, all love excelling." And the love of God is so greatly shed abroad in his soul that in another supreme moment of holy experience he loves these men, his enemies, and prays for them. Methinks presently Job forgave and loved all his enemies; all those who had reviled and slandered him, all who had cheated him in business, or who had borne false witness against him. He loves his enemies now!

But what is happening now? Behold the astonished faces of those infidels! Job's leprosy is departing. His skin is becoming pink and white, like that of a youth. The inflammation has gone. Ah! now I surely know Job's besetting sin; I think he did not really love his enemies, nor pray for them. This is what God, in his love for Job, was after. Now good Job is ready to live and ready to die, and to be promoted when his time shall come.

But what is this, — what is this dust in the distance? It must be a mighty herd of cattle coming! Behold all of Job's live-stock is coming back to him; only — what can it mean? There is a herd twice as large as he had! The infidels are converted, I think, by the miraculous change in Job's condition and property.

And Job is full of joy, but in his honest heart he exclaims, "These cattle are not all mine, nor all these camels. Such camels I never saw! See that magnificent specimen, — the finest camel that ever bore a burden for man!"

Thereupon, one of the former revilers excitedly called out, "Yes, Job, they must all

be yours; for, see, every one of them has your mark."

Job, perceiving this, with reverent voice may have said, "This is the Lord's doing; blessed be His name."

Now notice one thing. When Job had proved that he would praise God no matter what came, and would really love his enemies, God gave him back his blessings of health and prosperity; but his afflictions of rebellious wife and cruel children are not mentioned as having been brought back upon him. Methinks Job proved so much, that God tried him no longer.

Friend, think not that I have meant to overstep the bounds of Scripture in the above relation. It is meant only to explain what I believe to be the deep things of the Book of Job. Yes, — Job got hold of the law of liberty. Job is my hero.

So Christ, as Job did, before his final triumph of the spirit, groaned aloud in His agony, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Nevertheless Thy will, not mine, be done. It was for this hour I came into the world." So, friend, may it not be that it was to be purified and refined and cultivated for

Heaven that you and I came into this world, — to be fitted for the next? If we would share the glories of Christ, we must also share His sufferings. Not otherwise can I understand the mission of tribulations.

Ah! I rejoice that I have shared *some* of the sorrows of my Master.

But to pass nothing by that would especially hinder our gaining this law of liberty, it is necessary to probe very deep into our heart of hearts to discover the controlling motive of our Christian life. What is your motive in being good and in doing good? If your motive is solely to get pure and straight without thought of helping others to Heaven: if your motive is to gain, by righteousness, a beautiful place in the world, to be loved and respected by others for your purity and your honesty, such motives will fail you and be found wanting when you seek a divine membership in the fellowship of the law of liberty. God will not give such the sanction of His full support. Such motives may wither and die. There is no real unselfishness, the water of life, at their roots.

But what, then, shall a man's motive be? A Scotchman answered that. When asked

what his business was, he replied, "My business is to glorify God, but I peg shoes for a living." That is the secret of admittance into the privileges of the law of liberty. That is the keynote which preludes the harmony of inspiration, — to glorify God by being pure and unselfish and Christlike; not for self-satisfaction or good report among men or neighbors. This motive God will seal with His divine approval, and great peace and joy and honor from above will be that man's portion. Do you remember John v. 44, which reads, "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"

John Wesley went about, during the first years of his ministry, almost fruitlessly, proving his own righteousness, so to speak; but when he forgot himself and sought the salvation of men for the glory of God and for their welfare, *then* came from Heaven the fire of success, and the divine approval fanned the fire till it spread, from a little spark in England, to two continents and round the world.

Satan often seeks to intercept the divine law by whispering to men the beauty of self-holiness, whereas the only holiness possible

is that which leaves out self. Thus is the personal element taken away and only God is left in its place; *then* men see God in you and are convicted and converted. Your life *then* is inspired by the Most High.

"But," says one, "is it not enough to live true religion by visiting the widows and fatherless in their affliction and to keep one's self unspotted from the world?"

Yes, indeed, but the last part of that definition of religion covers the point I refer to, namely, our motive in being religious should be to glorify God without being spotted by any thought of the glory or applause the world will give us. So Longfellow witnessed when he said the right way to do one's work was to do the best we could without thought of fame. This also strikes the keynote which preludes the harmony of inspiration divine.

Ah! *then* if our motive is solely to glorify God by our sincerely devout lives, THEN will the glory of Heaven descend upon us; dove-like it will stretch its white wings of benediction over us and accompany us in our work, so long as by prayer and purpose we keep at the point where our highest hope is to glorify God.

Kindly note that word "keep." It has a wonderful power in it. Christ said if ye love me ye will *do* my words. But He also said, if ye KEEP my words, my Father and I will make our abode with you.

Let us, then, glorify God!

If your motive is to glorify God, *that* does away forever with the hydra-headed monster named "fear of the world." If such be your motive, you care not for that bugbear of the world, what it says or thinks of you, as long as you do right and have God's approval in your soul. To one truly consecrated to Him, this fear of the world is but a bugbear, a bear as large as an insect, — nothing very terrible when you analyze its meaning.

When you make the motive of your life to glorify God through Christ, and keep to it, *then* you have solved the problem of life and proved the Christ principle.

Thus only can you receive the degree of a doctor of the law of liberty. It can be received in the hayfield or in college.

Some one says, "I have no sickness, neither do I cry. My barns are full; prosperity sits on my doorstep. I don't think I need the law of liberty."

All right, such a one! No, forgive me, you are all wrong. You have not taken into consideration your soul, that which will live forever. Your soul needs the law of liberty.

In old age thy strength shall weaken. Then shall thy sufficiency mock thee; for thy sufficiency will not bribe the angels that guard the gates of eternity. Thou needest the law of liberty now, but how much more wilt thou need it then?

I speak now to those in sorrow. As a servant of the "Man of Sorrows," I offer you the perfect law of liberty, which will make you free, and free indeed. Your sorrow will flee away.

This day have you not read or heard something that gives you a glimpse of happiness?

"Yes," says one, "a thrill of joy awakens me into the understanding of what I might be if I would."

Very well, then willingly seek the Author of the law of liberty, and peace and hope shall be thine. Thy joy shall be fulfilled. The thrill that came to thy heart was a ray of God's mercy. Enfold it in thy heart, and thou shalt hold the hope thou hast.

Some people there are who are seemingly

under no restraint, and others who, mistaken, are under the letter of the law, not discerning the spirit of the law. Both are to be pitied, and are out in the cold.

It is the wish of God that all should know Him, and be free.

Those without restraint are going straight into the depths of eternal bondage. They cry, "Live while you live, for to-morrow you die." The death of these shall be ever-dying, and always living in agony; no life in Heaven shall they enjoy. But they shall know that Heaven is, and that they have lost it.

Others there are who are bound by the letter of the law and have not been freed by the spirit of the law of liberty. Such are bound by the infallible laws representing the penalties of sin, some by ill-health, some by pinching poverty, some by domestic distress grievous to be borne, unless the spirit of freedom sets them free.

Yet this perfect law of liberty declares all such freedmen to-day, if they but will be free. It takes the hard yoke from the galled shoulders and substitutes the yoke of Christ, which is easy and light.

This law of liberty declares liberty to thee,

son of prosperity, who in health and abundance yet knowest not God, the Giver of both. Apparently without restraint, thou art yet bound with double thongs of imprisonment. Oh, I love such. To think that thou hast everything and yet hast nothing! If thou wouldst only turn thy heart heavenward all thy prosperity could be turned into the joys of usefulness. As it is, will not thy forces, which thou art consuming in thoughtlessness, turn into a fire which will consume thee thyself? Oh, turn to God, take Christ into thy life, and thy consecrated prosperity shall bring thee peace and safety. If thou turnest not, it will lead thee, unheeding, ruthlessly down the incline to Hell.

"Turn ye, turn ye. Why will ye die?"

Be blessed by the perfect law of liberty. Enroll thyself among its sons.

"Oh," another says, "I am free enough. I don't think I will bother about this law of liberty anyhow. Someway I don't like to go to church. I don't hear anything that makes me feel happy, and sometimes, if the preaching is extra good and has the right ring to it, I feel condemned. I often wish I had stayed at home and read a book."

Ah! there 's the point! You do need this law of liberty, else you would not feel condemned in your spirit. Know this, then, there is no condemnation to those who are in the Lord Jesus Christ. Never hear anything in church that gives you a thrill of joy, a feeling of aspiration after something better, an exaltation of hope, a knowledge of how to escape from present condemnation? Then you have been listening to the wrong preacher.

Is it not enough to create happiness in you to know that Christ now presents to you, if you will come near enough to take it from His own hand, a passport into everlasting happiness and a protection from everlasting Hell? No sickness in Heaven, no sorrow nor crying, no disappointments nor misunderstandings; contentment, and your heavenly wishes gratified forever! Is this, then, not enough? If you wish more, you have it in the words, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." There is nothing more than "all."

Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free." But I have seen this scripture wronged, and I have seen men who have wrested these words from their true meaning unto their own destruction.

This scripture is akin to the law of liberty, and so I would help you to beware lest you think those words of Christ mean that the truth will make you free to be liberal, as it is falsely called, to believe what seems right to you, perhaps, unillumined by the Spirit-Mind. "Liberal" means "fair," and it is fair to expound Scripture only when your mind is in the power of the Holy Ghost.

"Yes," says Mr. Liberal, "the Bible says the truth shall make me free; free to think as I please. Then there is no Hell, because the idea shocks me."

Oh, you don't say so! Are you anybody in particular, to ruthlessly wrest the truth from its pedestal of facts? Did you ever think that "free" meant free from the power of sin?

"No Hell?" you say. What right have you to make such a statement in face of the Bible saying the contrary? Why not say "no Heaven," and be an open and out-and-out ambassador of Satan?

"No Hell," no wrath of God, no divine jealousy for broken laws divine? Tell me, then, why is an innocent child born a con-

sumptive? Why does the relentless law of heredity bring the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generations?

Ah, God's wrath is all about us, as well as His love. It is stamped on the countenances of many we meet. Believe me, in all kindness, "The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom."

You surely cannot now say, "God is a God of love alone."

Be not deceived. Hell *is!*

The law of liberty makes us free and safe from the power of evil, hereafter as well as here. There shall be no Hell for him who wears at death the decoration of the law of liberty on his soul. It conquers the grave, and turns death to blessedness.

"But is the soul immortal?" a friend remarks.

Yes, it is immortal.

"Well, I would like you to prove it to me."

I will tell you how it can be proved.

There are two ways in which the immortality of the soul can be proved to your consciousness and to your satisfaction. The first

is by your will and consent, and the second, whether you will or no.

The first proof is, if you willingly do or obey the teachings of Christ, you will come to realize, and to your satisfaction know, the existence of a personal God, of Heaven and Hell, of your own soul and its immortality.

By such *willing* obedience your soul will be made alive, which may now be dormant and well-nigh covered up by the rubbish of worldliness or unbelief. In obeying the words of Christ you cultivate and educate that soul of yours, and bring it into its normal condition, which is to have faith in God.

Oh, won't you turn? why will you die unsaved?

The second proof, whether you will or no, is this: —

Come; let us approach the time of death, when the strength of your heart grows weak, and dissolution is almost present.

When your breath gets short, when you breathe with difficulty and are near the gates of death, then you become conscious of something like a great light in you; it is as if you were turning into something else.

What is this light? It is that part of you which is immortal.

Your body now seems to fall from you like a discarded garment.

Your intellect seems to yield its supremacy to the spirit, and here right before you and in you and of you, right before your consciousness, so that you are well aware of it, is your immortal soul, your immortal self, — that part of you which cleaves the sky after death, and which, endowed with all sensibility, enjoys, if redeemed, a blessed existence forever.

This is the second proof, made by divine dictation, whether you will or no.

"How do I know this?" you ask.

Because I have been down into that country where breaths come short and labored, — the door of death, and I found it as I have said.

When, on a bed of sickness, life grows dim, the gate of Heaven seems to open to our redeemed vision, and we may see angels ready to welcome us. "Crown him victorious!" they shout. "Welcome to Heaven!"

But then the voice of God speaks in the soul of him who thought he would die, say-

ing, "Not yet; I am not yet through with you; your work is not yet done. Again must you enter the battle of life to live for Me and to glorify Me; and you shall enrich your heavenly portion by suffering yet to come, and by your labor of love for Me. You must share Christ's sufferings, or you cannot share His glory above."

Now at the time of death, the living spirit transcends the dying physical, and its powers are undimmed by ordinary limitations as is not often the case when we are otherwise situated, and the living spirit's vision is now uninterrupted. Unveiled, the eye of faith, an element of the soul, now sees with wondrous clearness. Thus it is that a pure-minded child or a consecrated adult dying will often exclaim, "I see Jesus," or "I can behold the Heavenly Land." Then is it possible for the eye of faith to ascend to Heaven, in some small measure, as the eye of God descends to earth.

Thus, at the end of life, does the spirit assert its right of recognition, whether we will or no.

What is a spirit when it goes to Heaven and lives?

A spirit is an intelligent form without a corruptible substance.

"You ask me to accept Christ, and live in this law of liberty?"

Yes, the love for Christ constrains me to love you and your welfare.

"I will put it off to some other time."

Oh, pray do not put this matter off. Know this, that when in sickness or your last illness, with the failing strength of body, the mind also, and your will, get weak; each of these is a servant of your heart's blood. Your mind then finds action difficult. It cannot grasp the truth in Christ as it can under stronger conditions. Then your condemned heart seeks to make your condemned mind get hold of the truth of salvation. It tries, but its strength fails it. God's Spirit shall not always strive with thee.

Baffled by weakness, you perchance will sink into the yawning gulf of insensibility, and in your waning consciousness your ear shall only hear the words that Satan shall say in his soliloquy, "Another fool neglected his chance to escape this doom."

Now when, instead of the Heaven-assuring voice of God upon your death-bed, devils sur-

round you and gloat over their supposed capture of you, how are you going to drive them away? They hover about you for your soul just as buzzards hover about a dying beast, anxious to possess it. How are you going to drive them away? Perhaps you can't. May be your conscience will be so dead and your mind so weak you will not have strength to approach the throne of grace, or get hold of Christ, the Saviour.

But if you should happen to have enough spiritual strength, even then you can repent and be saved. You can call on God, and your sincerity will bring Him very near, and the devils cannot bear the brightness of His coming. Like bats they will fly away and hide in the dark.

But how many death-bed repentances think you there are, out of the whole number, counted worthy to enter Heaven?

One per cent.?

I think that is a very large estimate. Can we take the chance of that one per cent.? Never! The way for us is to make our peace with God now. "*Now* is the appointed time." When you are ready to die you are ready to live.

And will you tell me this? If you cannot drive the evil away now through a present knowledge of God and His power within you, how are you going to drive it away when the devil shall sit by your bedside, waiting for you to die? If you cannot now drive away the evils of unbelief, impurity, selfishness, and the other servants of Satan, how can you when you are in the weakness of death?

So — Ho, every one that thirsteth for the perfect law of liberty, that law which is a passport to Heaven and a protection from Hell!

Ho! Every one that thirsteth to be free!

Ho! Every one that is being chastened under the rods of ill-health, of distress domestic or financial!

Ho! Every one to whom the yoke of disappointment is galling!

Ho! Ye who are sitting in the shadows of great sorrows!

Ho! Ye who are tired of sin!

Good news for you to-day!

There is a way to be free! There is relief for you! Your humiliation shall be turned into rejoicing, and your distress to success in the spirit of God.

Come, only come and take Christ into your life.

Come, only come and give your heart to God.

Come, in love I invite you.

Come, be born again of the Holy Spirit.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost will then be your strength, your hope, your comfort.

Come under the wings of the perfect law of liberty, which is the result of faith in and obedience to Christ; and your tears shall be wiped away, and a better smile than the long-ago smile will transfigure your countenance.

"Harden not your hearts."

Arise and be free! "And he *arose* and came unto his father."

Determine you will serve God. Resolve you will follow Christ. Make up your mind you will keep the Holy Spirit in your soul. And God through Christ will save you.

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5